DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

DURHAM, N. C.

Rec'd May 21, 1929

Library Fee

Fund

THE

SUBSTANCE

OF A

FUNERAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST

OF

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE,

ON

Tuesday, the 23d of April, 1816,

IN

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH,

PHILADELPHIA:

ON THE

DEATH

OF THE

REV. FRANCIS ASBURY,

SUPERINTENDENT, OR SENIOR BISHOP,

OF

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

NOW ENLARGED.

BY EZEKIEL COOPER,
PRESBYTER OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

134976

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY JONATHAN POUNDER, NO. 134,
North 4th street, opposite St. George's Church.
1819.

922.7
A799Ca
SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the tenth day of April, in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1819. Jonathan Pounder of the said District, hath deposited in this office the Title of a book the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"The substance of a Funeral Discourse, Delivered at "the Request of the Annual Conference, on Tuesday, "the 23d of April, 1819, in St. George's Church, Phila- "delphia: on the Death of the Rev. Francis Asbury, "Superintendent, or Senior Bishop, of the Methodist "Episcopal Church: now Enlarged. By Ezekiel Cooper, "Presbyter of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

In Conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, intitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to the act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to on act, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE original Discourse, of which the following contains the substance, was delivered extemporaneously, by the special request of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At that time, there was no expectation of its publication; but, after it was delivered, the Conference requested the author, to commit it to writing, and to supply a copy for publication: in compliance with that request, the author wrote it down; and endeavoured, to the best of his memory and recollection, to give the substance truly and fully.

It is not to be expected that an extemporary discourse could be written exactly as it was delivered; so that, although, in substance it may be the same; yet, in some respects, as to the mode, and manner, of expatiating upon, and illustrating, some points, and details, there may appear to be some difference. Indeed, it could not be reasonably expected otherwise; for, in the nature of things, it was impossible for the author, to write it verbatim, as he delivered it from the pulpit. He never pretended to any thing more, than to be able to give the substance; and nothing more was expected.

Sundry circumstances, and considerations, not necessary here to detail, have occasioned a long delay in the publication: and indeed, for some considerable time, the author very seriously hesitated, whether he would supply a copy for publication at all: He had rolled up the Manuscript, and laid it by, among some other papers, which, perhaps, will never come

134976

to public view. However, having been repeatedly solicited, and pressingly advised, by sundry persons who heard it delivered, to let it be published; he has, at length, upon mature deliberation, and counsel with several preachers and private members, thought it adviseable to yield to the advise and solicitation of his friends; and, he has, accordingly, consented, to supply a copy for publication.

The author, had contemplated, if the discourse should ever appear in print, to have published with it, sundry notes, or an appendix— by way of further illustration, explanation, or enlargement; however, he has been advised to incorporate the notes, with, and in, the body of the discoure, wherever they were connected with their correspondent parts respectively; that the reader might not be taken off, from the continuity of the discourse, by references to the notes. On deliberate reflection, this course is thought to be adviseable; therefore, the author has adopted it, and united a part of the notes with the regular continuity of the discourse. This circumstance, has made a considerable enlargement: however the original discourse, was so long, that it took one hour and a half to deliver it from the pulpit.

The author has nothing more to say, than, such as it is, he submits it to the public, most sincerely praying, that it may be useful. The Lord bless us all, with grace, mercy, and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our adorable Redeemer: so prays the AUTHOR.

THE SUBSTANCE

OF A

FUNERAL DISCOURSE, &c.

2 Tim. iii. Chap. 10. ver. *But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience.*

BRETHREN, on what impressive and affecting occasion, have we, with such apparent solemnity, now assembled? Every countenance is indicative of sadness and gloom!—Every aspect, every appearance around me, portends a day of distress, affliction, and mourning!—Under what unusual excitement, has so very large a concourse of friends and citizens, been induced, on a day of worldly business, to leave their various secular occupations, worldly professions, and pecuniary pursuits; and, with such apparent concern of mind, to assemble at the temple of the Lord, now turned into the house of mourning?*

* It was supposed, that in, and round the church, there were from three to four thousand people.—*Pub.*

Surely, some extraordinary and eventful occurrence has taken place, to produce so remarkable an excitement upon the public mind; its nature and circumstances, must be unusually affecting, to have such an influence, as now appears, upon the feelings of the community—The pensive appearance, the sorrowful countenances, the great solemnity, and the appendages of mourning, on every hand, bespeak aloud, some sad intelligence; or the occurrence of some adverse and painful event, giving poignant grief, and keen affliction; piercing the hearts, smiting and wounding the tender sensibility of our afflicted Israel, with sorrow and sighing —I almost tremble, and am ready to falter, in coming at the point, to announce the woful tale of sorrow!—But I presume, the sad intelligence, the mournful occasion is well known to you all! *Asbury is dead!*

I am called on, by the special request of the conference, to perform an arduous and a painful task, as the organ through which the mournful tidings, and sorrowful intelligence of the *death* of *Bishop Asbury*, is, this day, to be publicly announced, and a funeral oration to be delivered, on the occasion, to this pensive assembly, this crowded concourse of people!—At the very threshold of this distressing and embarrassing duty, I am so oppressed and bowed down, and my sensibility so

much affected, that I am not able, even were I disposed, to conceal the impression, which the occasion makes upon my full and throbbing heart!—If ardent affection for a departed friend, and a sincere attachment to a lamented father; combined with a deep concern for the cause of religion, and united with an association of affecting ideas, and heart melting contemplations; arising from the recollection of what is past, from a knowledge of what is present, and from a consideration of what is to come; should, so far excite and influence my sensibility, as to obstruct, in some degree, my articulation; or, even at intervals, to cause me to falter, and in silence and tears to weep—I hope, that the occasion, will be an ample justification, and that no apology will be thought necessary to excuse the weakness. Nay, you anticipate me—I see, from your tears, that our united hearts, in unison, swell with fulness of emotion, and are almost ready to overflow, and break forth into floods of mutual sorrow and lamentation! Ah, my brethren! upon an occasion like the present, it is compatible with humanity and christianity, with sound heads and good hearts, *to weep with those that weep!* Even *Jesus wept*, when his friend died—*Behold, how he loved him!*

We are now, about to pay the last sad of-

fice, of duty and respect, to the memory of a great man, who has fallen in Israel!—A father in Israel is dead! Bishop Asbury is no more! He sleeps in the dust of the valley! When living, he was greatly beloved, and universally esteemed;—now dead, he is as greatly, and as universally lamented! His distinguished name, his excellent character, and pious memory, will be spoken of in all the churches, and be held in venerable admiration and everlasting remembrance.

The pulpit, is a place, from whence, we have been in the habit of proclaiming, glad tidings of great joy, to listening multitudes; and from whence, you have been accustomed to hear, good news, to rejoice the heart and delight the soul—But now, alas! I am the messenger of grief; to announce sorrowful tidings, sad intelligence, and mournful news; which, for a season, dispels our joys, and turns our gladness into sorrow and mourning. This day, instead of being the herald of good news, and bringer of glad tidings; I am the bearer of sad information; which, covers the church with the mantle of sorrow, and causes the thousands of our Israel to mourn, and to set down in grief, as it were, by the rivers of Babylon, and to hang their harps upon the willows, and with lamentation to weep, while they think of Zion! Why, alas! is the pulpit, the desk,

the chandelier, the congregation, the preachers, and the people, so clad with funeral emblems? Our full hearts respond to the question. *Bishop Asbury is no more!*

What means this vesture of black, this mournful shroud, around me, that covers the pulpit where I stand? Why is the sacred desk, so clothed with the sable mantle of grief and mourning? Is it an indication that the pastoral voice of our shepherd and bishop, which used to echo the joyful sound of gospel grace with so much delight, and useful instruction, is now hushed and silenced in death; and is to be heard from hence no more? And that the venerable man, now sleeping in the grave, shall no more be seen in person, to grace the sanctuary, to proclaim salvation, and to instruct the congregation of God's people in this church? Is he no more to go in and out before us? And also, why is that chandelier, from whence the lighted candles, usually, illuminate the church, now covered with a dark veil? Is it emblematical? Is it appropriated to the occasion? doth it, on reflection, suggest this intimation to the mind, that a great and shining light, in the church of God, is now extinguished? and no more to let his light shine before men, that others may see his good works? He was as a light to the world; not put under a bushel, but on the candle-

stick, to give light to all within the house. But, the lamp of life is burnt out; he burns, he shines no more; excepting it be in the remembrance of his bright examples, and his illustrious doctrines. And wherefore is it, that the house of God, the place of prayer, of praise, of rejoicing, and gladness; is now so clothed in the apparel of sadness and gloom, and clad with the badges of deep mourning and sorrow? I look around, and survey this crowded assembly, and, with inexpressible emotions, I behold an unusual appearance, and uncommonly affecting in its aspect—tears and silence, give an unutterable expression, speaking louder, and more emphatically heard and felt, to the sensibility of the heart, than words can utter.—No pathetic strains of human language, no artificial flowers of pensive rhetorick, can speak, to the feelings of the heart, like the deep touches of sorrow and distress, engraven in your pensive countenances, over which, the falling tears are rolling down; or, like crystal drops, quivering on the eyelids, and then trickling down so many faces—This expressive aspect, this impressive tone, discoverable throughout this great concourse of people, laudibly proclaim to every sympathetic observer, that there is, truly, and verily, a noted difference between an observance of mere ceremonious formality, and a solemnity

of real and spontaneous feeling. Are you melted into sympathy? Your mourning looks proclaim it; your flowing tears attest it. What doth all this mean? The sighs, the groans, the weeping eyes, the flowing tears, the deep concern depicted in your sorrowful countenances; all are impressive expressions, giving evidence of sympathetic sensibility, and melting emotions of sorrow and grief.

Truly, we have met with an afflictive dispensation of adversity, in one of the most distressing and trying occurrences, that has ever befallen the Methodist Episcopal church in America; and, probably, under all the peculiarities and circumstances of the case, the like never will, perhaps, never can befall us again! Public notification, has already announced, that, at this time, a funeral discourse, is to be delivered, upon the occasion of the death, of our much beloved, and greatly lamented, father in the gospel, Francis Asbury, senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church. Alas! what did I say? The death of Francis Asbury! And is it so, that bishop Asbury is dead? Yes, my brethren, the stroke of death is given; the sad tidings are confirmed; stern necessity compels us, at last, to say, though with tears, that Asbury is no more! The great, the good, the wise, the laborious, the useful and the beloved bishop Asbury is dead!—

His labours, his afflictions, and his sufferings are over! He has paid the last sad debt of nature; all tears are wiped from his eyes; he will labour and suffer no more; he rests from his labour, and his works will follow him! Our father, our bishop, and friend, will visit us no more! He will not return to us, but we shall follow him.

This mournful pulpit, where I now stand, has often sustained his venerable form; while proclaiming to you, and listening multitudes, the unsearchable riches and treasures of grace!—His expresssive looks, his heavenly countenance, his melodious, full toned voice, his silvered gray locks, encircling his venerable brow, his zealous labors, his wholesome instructions, and pious counsels: are all, at this moment, represented to our view, and lively recollection. The imagination can portray, and almost realize, the picture of his actual presence before our eyes, and the echo of his voice, as if sounding in our ears!—But alas! we shall see his face no more! we shall never hear his voice again! The messenger death, hath closed the scene! We need not marvel that the church should be clad in deep mourning; the congregation be overwhelmed with sadness; the preachers be bathed in tears; and the people to sit in sorrow and sighing! Departed worth, demands the tribute of a tear;

the memory of the pious dead calls forth the effusions of respectful sympathy, among surviving friends! We are at the house of mourning!

What am I about? On what strange topic is this I am dwelling? I am almost ready to pause! And under the influence of some strange emotions, to recoil at the idea of what I have stated; and with an impulse of surprise, and incredulous doubt, to ask, Are we not dreaming? Is it a reality? or, can it be so? that bishop Asbury, is certainly dead? Alas! O, that we were but authorised to countermand the report! If, peradventure, it were but God's good pleasure, for his own glory, the good of the church, and the benefit of the world, how would we rejoice, abundantly, in being able to pronounce that our Asbury yet lived! But, the die is cast, the seal is fixed; it is a sad reality; it is no fancy or imagination; inflexible truth pronounces *He is dead*!—Nay, not dead, *but he sleepeth*—he has fallen asleep in the arms of his Saviour. *He that liveth and believeth in me*, (said Christ) *though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* Hence, we may say, though he be dead, yet he liveth, and is alive forevermore. He liveth in the remembrance and affectionate esteem of his brethren; and will live forever, with his God, among the glorified spirits made holy and

perfect in redeeming love! The animal life is extinct; the organs of corporeal sense, are locked up in the silence of death; the mortal body, for a season, is consigned to the tomb, to sleep with composure, in the solitary slumbers of mortality; there, quietly to rest, in its original dust of the earth, the house, and the bed, appointed for all living, till the morning of the resurrection—Then, the triumphant spirit shall come, and put it on afresh! Till then, the departed spirit, in its immortal state, of separate and conscious existence, lives with its God, in the enjoyment of uninterrupted, and supernal felicity!—And, when the last trumpet shall sound, *Arise ye dead, and come to judgment!* the sleeping dust shall awake, arise, and come forth, all immortal, to everlasting life! *All that are in their graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

"*If a man die, shall he live again?*" Yes, my brethren; then let us not sorrow, as without hope. When the night of death hath passed away, and the glorious morning shall usher in; then, our departed friend, with the thousands of Israel, shall rise triumphant, at the sound of the trumpet, shouting and exclaiming, *O death! where is thy sting? O*

grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; the dead shall be raised incorruptible—for this corruptible, must put on incorruption, and this mortal, must put on immortality; and death be swallowed up in victory. Hail! that happy day! When the eternal Judge, of quick and dead, shall call the sanctified, who have washed their robes white, in the blood of the Lamb, to receive their complete and full reward; then, we hope to see our departed friend again, all resplendant, going forth to meet the adorable Saviour, and to be forever with the Lord. Then, the Judge of all the earth, will say to him, and to every holy sanctified child of God, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!* O, that we, who have known and lived with him here, may reign and dwell with him there! Then, we shall no more be parted forever. Neither sorrow, nor sighing, nor affliction, nor death, can enter that heavenly place. All tears, shall be wiped away from their eyes; and there shall be weeping no more. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads; to obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning

them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord: wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

When the conference requested me to deliver a sermon on the present occasion, I was, for some time, at a stand, to determine what passage of scripture to select, as most appropriate and suitable for a text on the important and melancholy occasion of the bishop's death. Various apt and interesting passages, both in the *Old* and *New* Testament, have been in succession presented to my mind—I felt inclined not to take one, which had been usually taken, either on special or ordinary occasions; and to select a passage particularly applicable to the case and character, of the venerable and remarkable man, under consideration. After as mature deliberation, reflection, and examination, as the short time allotted me would admit of, I have given the preference to that,

which I have read unto you. I cannot call to mind any passage of scripture, which, to me, appears more directly in point, as applicable to the truly evangelical doctrine and the apostolic manner of life, and admirable christian character, of that venerable and wonderful man, bishop Asbury; nor one more suitable, as an impressive subject, on the minds and recollections of his mourning ministerial brethren, and his weeping pastoral charge; whom he has left, in tears, to remember, to believe, and to follow *his doctrine;* and diligently, and perseveringly, to imitate and follow his *pious example*, and *holy manner of life*, in *purpose*, *faith*, *long-suffering*, *charity*, *patience:* Perhaps there is no text more suitable for the occasion. And I am almost persuaded, that if the departed, disembodied, happy spirit, were now hovering over us, and could be consulted, and were permitted to speak, and to communicate with us, on the occasion, that there are few, if any passages, which he would more cordially approve, as a text for his funeral discourse.

Being dead, he yet speaketh to our memory, and to our recollection, in language like the text. Our feeling hearts vibrate, at the recollected accents of his tongue, the emphatic energy of his diction, and the still more forcible language of his well remembered

examples. We have heard and read, of the voice of the dead to the living—And, perhaps, there is a greater intimacy, a more frequent intercourse, and a nearer connexion, between departed spirits, and the living, than many are willing to admit—Why should it be thought a thing incredible, that God should even *raise the dead?* and why not, permit departed spirits, on certain occasions, to communicate with the living? The spirit that appeared to John, in the Revelation, said unto him, "*I am thy* FELLOW SERVANT, *and of* THY BRETHREN, *that have the testimony of Jesus*"—and again, "*I am thy* FELLOW SERVANT, *and of* THY BRETHREN THE PROPHETS, *and of them which keep the sayings of this book:* In the case, when our Lord took Peter, James, and John, into a high mountain, and was transfigured before them—*Behold, there* APPEARED UNTO THEM, *Moses and Elias, talking with him: they* SAW *his glory, and* THE TWO MEN *that stood with him.* A bright *cloud overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud,* "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:*"—*And the disciples heard it, fell on their face, and were sore afraid—And suddenly—they saw no man* ANY MORE, *save Jesus with themselves.*—Hark!—In solemn silence pause!—Methinks, I almost hear his voice whisper, to every kindred spirit, to every mind that knew him, to every heart

that loved him, "Follow me, as I followed Christ." *Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience*—May it sink deep, in every heart!—remain long, in every mind!—and rest with weight upon the soul of every minister and member of the church!

Holy men of old, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. In their writings, we have doctrines, precepts, reproofs, corrections, and instructions, in righteousness; as a complete and all sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice, to direct and guard us, perfectly, with God's blessing, against false doctrines, wrong practices, and evil workers—And they, being dead, yet speak to us in the sacred book—And may it not also be said, of other eminent and distinguished men of God, whose works praise them in the gates of Zion, whose apostolic doctrines, and holy manner of life, whose arduous labours and distinguished usefulness, have left behind them, standing memorials, and indisputable testimonials of their excellence and worth in the world; and so long as the fruits and effects of their useful lives and labours stand, as a living monument, that mankind has been made wiser, and better, and happier; and the world has been benefitted, by their studies, their researches, their labours, and their manner of life; may it not be said, truly and verily, that though dead, they continue to

speak to us, and their voice is heard in the world? The exemplary and instructive voice of the dead to the living, very often, is received with more weight, more respect, and more authority, than the same warning, or counsel, or instruction, would be, from the living. The silent remembrance of departed worth, the recollected examples of the pious dead, the wise counsels, and good advise, of friends, who are no more; come home to our feelings, with more energy; speak louder, and with more impressive influence, to the sensibility of the soul, than the vocal precepts and instructions of the living.

In life, it is admitted, that example speaks louder than precept; but when death, strikes the fatal blow, and cuts down our dearest friends; it gives a more emphatic tone, to their recollected sentiments and counsels; and a more impressive energy, to their remembered examples. O death! with what gigantic force, with what majestic power, doth it strike the most dormant passion of the soul, rouse the most latent sensibility of the mind, and kindle up the remotest sparks of sympathetic tenderness and affection! The feelings of the heart are excited into action, and melted into softness, or throbbing grief and anguish, at beholding a beloved friend, bidding this world, and us, a final farewell; and groaning out his last expiring breath,

as he sinks a lifeless corpse, in the cold arms of death! Then how we review and call to mind, with new emotions, with strange sensations, the past occurrances of his life! His instructive words, his pleasing actions, his amiable deportment, his good examples, and every thing worthy and useful in his life, is called to mind with double effect, upon the feelings of the heart. Every excellence, appreciates to an additional value; so that it is sometimes said, We never knew their value and full worth; nor how much we loved them, until they were taken from us. Will not this, in some measure, apply, in the case before us? Doth not the manner of life, and the many excellencies of our brother Asbury, speak to our memories, our reason, our affections, and to our consciousness, with renewed energy, and appreciated value? While touching on this feeling subject, I, again, almost imagine, that his venerable portraiture is in full view before me: as in a perspective vision, I behold, as it were, his person, his countenance, his snow-white hair, and his diversity of deportment, in all the vicissitudes of his fluctuating and useful life. I almost fancy, that the echo of his voice, is sounding in our ears; and that his kindred spirit, as a guardian angel, is hovering over us, waving his wings, and saying, in gentle whispers; "Ye have fully known my doctrine, manner

of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience."

He always manifested a particular attachment, to the directions, instructions, and injunctions, given by St. Paul, to Timothy and Titus; as being directly connected with, and applicable to, the ministerial offices and duties, in the church of Christ; and, as dependant on which, and a faithful discharge of the same, existed, in a great degree, the important and essential interests of religion, in the house of God. In his episcopal and pastoral charges and addresses, how frequently did he adopt the sentiments and language, of St. Paul, particularly, to Timothy and Titus; relative to the office and work of the ministry: in teaching, governing, and leading the flock of Christ, in the paths of piety, and the ways of salvation?

The *Motto*, on his official Episcopal *Seal*, with which he executed the *Credentials*, or Letters of orders, for those whom he ordained, and set apart to the work of the ministry, in the church of God, was selected from the apostles charge to Timothy; which was, "STUDY TO SHEW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD:"—that always, on looking over, or reviewing their *parchment*, or Letters of ordination, and on seeing *his hand and seal* of Episcopal authority, they might have before their eyes, the charge and injunction, as a

MEMENTO, to stir up their minds, by way of remembrance, to a fresh and lively recollection of their duty, their obligations, and their promise; and to a solemn and serious reflection, upon their accountability, and responsibility, to God; in the great eternal day: as those, who must give an account, for the faithful discharge and performance of the sacred duties and trusts, committed to their care. How great, and how awful, the charge, the responsibility, and the accountability!

The words of our text, he sometimes expatiated on, and improved and applied it, to ministers and people, as an excellent remembrancer, to put them in mind, of the Apostolic doctrine, and manner of life, as an example for us, as ministers and christians to follow; as in duty bound, we ought, most carefully and diligently to observe.

In the primitive days of christianity, the Apostle saw that false doctrines, and evil workers, would creep into the church; and that the mystery of iniquity had already began to work: therefore, to put Timothy, and the church, on their guard, against those evil characters, and enemies to the truth of sound doctrine; and to fortify them, against innovators, who would endeavour to bring in condemnable heresies, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, he proposes an antidote against their poison; and recommends

to Timothy, a firm, constant, and vigilant, adherence to the *doctrines of the gospel of Christ;* which he, both held and preached among them; and which, Timothy, had so fully known. He enjoins a careful imitation and following of that example, of piety and holiness, so fully known, and exemplified, in his own *manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience.* He also enjoins, a steadfast adherence to the holy scriptures, which he had known from a child; and which were, able to make him wise to salvation, through faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ: "All scripture, given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Thus the apostle, sets up a standard, and states a criterion, and lays down a rule, by which, we may try, test, and prove, all doctrines, and manner of life.—"To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Whether we consider the words of our text, as the apostle's, originally addressed to Timothy, to the church, and to successive generations; or as the adopted language of our late Bishop, in appropriate fitness, and suitable application, as addressed to us,

they are, in either case, for our instruction, and as a remembrancer. In them, we hear the voice, and the address, of the dead to the living. When we think of our departed brother, let us call to mind the language of the text; and when we hear, or recollect these words, let us remember the doctrine, the pious example, and holy manner of life, to which they refer; and let us steadfastly adhere to the one, and diligently follow the other.

Thou hast fully known—Probably, Timothy, had not a more intimate knowledge of Paul, than we have had of Asbury. We have known him as our father, preceptor, leader, and guide, in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have known him long, even from youth to old age. We have known him as a man, as a christian, as a citizen, as a minister of the gospel, and as a general superintendant, or bishop, in the church of God. We have known him in public and in private; among friends and among enemies; in prosperity and adversity; generally and particularly; intimately and thoroughly; or *fully known him.* The relative situation in which he stood connected with the church; and the circumstances and manner of his life; exposed him, continually, to public or private observation and inspection, and subjected him to a constant and critical review; and that from day to day, and from year to year.

Through the United States, and every State in the Union, from east to west, and from north to south; hundreds of thousands, have had their eyes upon him, their ears open to him, their tongues speaking of him, and their heads and hearts, their opinions and sentiments, their partialities and prejudices, their passions and affections, variously employed and exercised about him. But few, very few, have been so generally known, both personally and characteristically. What more perfect knowledge, could we possibly have of any man, than we have had of him? In all his various and extensive movements, through all his complicated and multiplied concerns; we have known him to be critically inspected, carefully watched, closely examined, thoroughly tested, and completely proved and tried: like gold or silver, seven times tried in the fire. Sometimes we have known him, as in the fires of strife, of envy, suspicion, and jealousy, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace; and yet, unhurt, in the midst of the flame. Or, like Daniel, in the lions' den; preserved in safety, in the midst of danger: when the beasts of the people, and the devil, like roaring lions, were seeking his destruction; and whomsoever else they might destroy. But that God, whom he believed, and loved, and served;

that God, "who quenched the violence of fire, and stopped the mouths of lions," took care of his servant "until the calamities were overpast:" for his soul trusted in him; yea, under the shadow of the Almighty wings did he make his refuge. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder, or asp: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."

We have known him—to be, the man of probity, integrity, fidelity, and punctuality; of truth, justice, mercy and benevolence; the christian, of strong faith, great watchfulness, importunate in prayer, deep humility, much patience, and of devout and holy living; the minister of unwearied diligence, indefatigable labours, incessant cares, and constant solicitude; for the prosperity of Zion, the success of the gospel, and the salvation of the people: In doctrine, sound, scrip-

tural, and evangelical; in labours abundant, faithful, and useful: As bishop, or superintendant, remarkably qualified for his station and office, and unusually diligent, persevering, and faithful, in his unwearied applications, to the abundant and complicated duties and labours of his official station: throughout all his vastly extended diocess, and arduous pastoral charge. He was loved, respected, esteemed, admired, and feared, with filial reverence, both by the ministers and people. He was accounted worthy *of double honor*, for his work's sake, as one that *ruled well*, and *laboured especially in the word and doctrine*.

His episcopal charges, official directions, and constitutional appointments and orders, in general, were punctually observed, and respectfully, willingly, and cheerfully obeyed. Very few, either primitive or modern, ever knew, or acquired the art, better than he, of obtaining, excercising and supporting, the pastoral and episcopal influence and authority; and of using it, with so much dignity, respectability, usefulness, and approbation. He had a particular qualification for governing; his peculiar temperature of mind and spirit, his dignified manner of conversation and deportment, his stern reserve, tempered by a social freedom, his authoritative decisions, softened down by gentle sooth-

ings, and his apparent inflexibility and independent opinion, placidly yielding to reasonable and amicable accommodations; carried with them an impressive, and almost irresistable influence; and gave him a kind of patriarchal ascendency and superiority. And which, had a powerful tendency to inspire others with filial reverence, and profound respect for the man, and to create a respectful diffidence, almost to embarrassment, in his presence; and to produce a pliable and courteous disposition of yielding, to his opinions, words, and wishes. Thus, in almost every circle, where he moved, he gained a kind of irresistable ascendency, influence, and authority, like a father in his family, and a ruler in Israel. We well know, what influence his presence had, what weight his words carried, and with what decision and precision, his opinion and judgment, would put to silence, and settle, the knotty, or the doubtful question. Who of us could be in his company without feeling impressed with a reverential awe, and profound respect, for the man, the christian, the minister, and ambassador of God? It was almost impossible to approach, and converse with him, without feeling the strong influence of his spirit and presence, upon our minds, sentiments, words, and actions. There was something, in this remarkable fact, almost inexplicable, and indes-

cribable. Was it owing to the strength and elevation of his spirit, the exalted and sublime conceptions of his mind, the dignity and majesty of his soul; or the sacred profession and authority, with which he was clothed, in his distinguished character; as an eminent christian, remarkable for piety, and an ambassador of God, invested with divine authority? But so it was, it appeared as though the very atmosphere in which he moved, gave unusual sensations of diffidence and humble restraint, to the boldest and most undaunted confidence of man. We now have, and, I hope and pray, we may continue to have, many excellent men, pious christians, good preachers, wise counsellors, useful instructors, and able prudent rulers; but alas! "to take him all and in all, his like we shall never see again!" Another *Francis Asbury*, another like him, we shall neither have nor know again! Our father! our father! has gone down to the silent shades of death! but his happy spirit, with Elijah's, has gone up to his God!

Brethren! of the ministry, now bewailing, your loss, in tears; to you he was especially known, ever since you entered the ministry; probably, ever since you possessed religion; and, perhaps, some of you, ever since your earliest recollection—to you, therefore, we might appeal, if necessary, as witnesses, of

what we advance. We might also appeal to many others, who for a long time, and some of you, for more than forty years, have known the distinguished worth, the superior excellence, and the pre-eminent usefulness of our venerable father. But on earth we shall know him no more; we are left to mourn and to suffer a little longer in this vail of tears. However, we must be resigned. "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."—We could not expect to have him always, nor keep him from his reward forever. We ought to be thankful, that we were favoured with him so long. We must learn to do without him. The Lord will provide. His memory, however, demands from us the tribute of respectful remembrance.

Brethren, of the ministry, you have not been accustomed to meet in your annual conference, without his presence amongst you, to cheer your spirits and gladden your hearts; and his wisdom, experience, and counsel, to aid and direct, in your deliberations and business. But his seat is now vacated, to be filled by another; it may be well filled, and much to your satisfaction; but, not as it was by him; a vacuum, a vacancy, will remain. It is enough to say, *He is not there:* he is no more to preside among you; no more to go in and out before you. I believe I enter into

your sympathies; you must feel like the sorrowful school of the prophets, when their senior, their father, was taken away!

We have been accustomed to receive the annual visits, of our Asbury, to be benefitted by his public ministry, to be instructed by his lectures and counsels, in society meetings, and to be profited by his pious conversations, and holy examples, in private families, and social circles. But now, my friends, while reflecting on the present sorrows, and comparing them with the past joys; you must feel a kind of melancholy pleasure, a strange conflict of emotions, arising from the pleasing remembrance of the past, and a painful sensation under the present distress. Though sorrowing and sighing, at his death; yet we rejoice and praise God, that he once lived, and that we ever saw his face and knew him, and enjoyed the unspeakable advantages of his labours of love. We bless God, that we have known, *fully known*, such a minister of the gospel, as the exemplary, the pious, the laborious, the useful Francis Asbury.

Thou hast fully known, MY DOCTRINE.—We have not only known him, but *his doctrine.* We now come on the subject of *doctrine.* As was before suggested, the Apostle Paul, forewarned Timothy, of perilous times to come, of great difficulties to encounter, of insiduous teachers, who would be creep-

ing into houses, and churches, and artfully endeavouring to lead the unwary and silly professors astray. He apprized him of false doctrines, erroneous opinions, vain speculations, and evil examples; which would be introduced among them, and probably, produce sad and awful effects, and destructive consequences, in the church of Christ. Therefore, to put Timothy on his guard, and to arm him against those pernicious delusion, and dangerous consequences; he refers him to the standard of truth, in the holy scriptures, as exemplified in his own doctrine, and manner of life, well known to Timothy; which were to be diligently followed, in opposition to those false teachers, and destructive errors, which were likely to produce heresy, schism, disorders, and confusion in the church; and irreligion, wickedness, and destruction, to the souls of the people. The gospel doctrine, founded on a firm rock, supported by its credible witnesses, competent testimony, and weight of internal evidence; can, alone, be sufficient, with God's blessing, to counteract, and overthrow, the fanciful notions, vain philosophy, uncertain hypothesis, and specious sophistry, of deluded, artful, and wicked men.

The term *doctrine*, signifies any tenet, opinion, principles or positions, of any sect, or teacher, whether true or false, in philosophy,

morals, or religion. Hence, we hear of the various doctrines of the ancient philosophers, such as the Stoicks, the Platonicks, the Pythagoreans, the Fatalists, and others. All sects, and all religions, have their peculiar doctrines; even we read of the doctrines of devils. Among the Jews, there were the doctrines of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the Herodeans. Our Saviour, warned his disciples against the leven of the Pharisees, and they perceived that he spake of their doctrine. He also warned them against the doctrine of the Sadducees, the Herodeans, and other false opinions, and doctrines, in morals and religion. The apostle, followed Christ; and our late bishop, carefully followed Paul, as he followed Christ; in the custom of warning the people, against delusions and errors, of doctrine and of practice. How often have we heard him proclaim against pharisaical self-righteousness, against antinomian licenciousness, against sadducean sceptical infidelity, and the herodean courtly flattery, dissimulation, and carnal temporizing.

We find that in different nations and ages, ancient and modern, that a diversity of sects and doctrines have existed; not only among heathens and Jews, but also among those who have called themselves christians, both Greeks, Romans, and Protestants—There

were the Manichees, the Arians, Pelagians, Socinians, Antinomians, and numerous others, of anti-christian, and anti-scriptural doctrines, strange delusions, and alarming fatal errors, of primitive and modern times, which have made awful havoc in the christian world; turning, as it were, the grace of God into lasciviousness; and many from the faith of the gospel, from the practice of piety, and from the way of salvation! Even in the apostolic days, the mystery of iniquity began to spread, and condemnable heresies were brought in, overthrowing the faith of some, and bringing swift destruction upon them. "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts will they heap to themselves teachers; having itching ears, they will turn away their ears from the truth, and will be turned unto fables."—Some of the false doctrines were of Jewish origin, others of Pagan derivation, and others of a strange heterogeneous compound, of Judaism, heathen philosophy, Pagan idolatry and superstition, blended with christianity. Others, again, from the vain philosophy, fanciful notions, and specious pretentions, of strange theological speculators; in schemes, systems, and bodies of divinity, so called.

Unfortunately, in the days of *St. Augustine*, bishop of *Hippo*, and of *St. Prosper*, his zealous advocate, in the end of the fourth, and beginning of the fifth century, there were too many of the doctrines of the Platonic school, and Stoical philosophy, of blind fatality, and of absolute, arbitrary, unavoidable necessity, strangely blended, and lamentably incorporated with the doctrines of the christian theology. Out of which, as it appears to me, in a great measure, arose the Antinomian doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation—the doctrine of absolute predestination of the elect to life and salvation, as immutably and infallibly certain, as absolute necessity can make it, do what they will; and the predestination of the reprobates to unavoidable destruction, as awfully certain, as fatality itself can fix it, do what they can! And all this, pretended to be unalterably established, by a supposed, irrevocable, immutable decree, made from all eternity. I can find nothing of this, in the apostles doctrine—nothing like this, was taught or believed by our late Bishop. He, and all of us to help him, could not find it, in the benevolent, the impartial, the just, and merciful doctrines, of the gospel of the free grace of God, in Christ Jesus. No, nor in the primitive fathers, previous to St. Augustine.

Some set up, and disseminate for doc-

trines, the wild effusions and vain imaginations of their own disordered fancies; some attempt to build and improve upon the speculative notions of other men; some appear to be influenced by the pride of vain philosophy; others by an enthusiastical imagination, bordering on fanaticism, proclaim the reveries of their own whimsical fancy; others by their prepossessions or prejudices, for or against any notion or opinion, as it may appear subservient to the predelictions of their passions, their interest, their perverse wills, their views of gratification, or the depraved inclinations of their own wicked hearts; and others again from some strange and unaccountable unstableness of mind, which subjects them to be driven about with every wind of doctrine, and to be the dupes of artful, insinuating, designing, or deluded men.

In the dark ages of popery, what an awful departure from the doctrines and authority of the scriptures of truth; from the spirit, and temper, and practice of the gospel; and almost from every moral virtue. And how deplorably was the church, so called, sunk into the abominations of idolatry and superstition, and into a profanation of sacred things!—The decrees and canons of councils, the papal bulls, and the decretals of the popes, were substituted, for divine authority, in

place of the holy scriptures, as a rule of faith and practice. The pure apostolic doctrines of the gospel, were almost entirely discarded. It was at the risk of property, liberty, and life; to believe, profess, and live up to the doctrines of Christ, as contained in the word of God. Exquisite tortures were inflicted, on those who dared to question the authority and the infallibility, of the Romish church, their councils, and popes; though ever so unscriptural, absurd, and horrid. I forbear to recite, even from ecclesiastical writers of that church, such as *Duphin*, doctor of the Sorbonne, and Royal Professor, in the ecclesiastical faculty at Paris, and others, the awful apostacy, and abominations of the church of Rome.

Many zealous and laudible efforts were made, against the corruptions of Rome, the tyranny of the popes, and the abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place; a long time, before much, if any, reformation could be produced. The Waldenses, the Albigenses, and others, struggled hard, but to little effect; they were generally suppressed and awfully slaughtered, and butchered, by divers methods of cruelty and torture; by the secular arm, then under the power and control of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Rome. At length, Wickliffe, of England, then John Huss, and Jerome, of Prague, made bold,

learned, pious, and deadly strokes, at the prevailing errors, abuses, and corruptions of popery. They sowed the seed of truth, which afterwards sprang up, and produced a blessed harvest of the word. When Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and other protestant Divines, being protected and supported by princely reformers, proclaimed the doctrines of the scriptures, and the authority of Christ, as a standard of divine truth; and the only divine rule of christian faith and practice; in opposition to the awful indulgences, and other prevailing errors, superstitions, and idolatry of the times; it was like a lamp that burneth, with brightness, to shine upon the path of salvation. The word of the Lord prevailed, and the doctrines of truth revived, and a great reformation took place, and spread in the earth.

But unfortunately, too many of the protestant reformed churches, in process of time, greatly sunk into formality, and into the spirit and temper of the world; and then, evangelical doctrines, and vital piety, again declined; and were too seldom heard from the pulpit, read from the press, or seen in the lives and deportment of professors. Genuine primitive christianity was greatly neglected, and scarcely to be found; excepting in corners, and solitary circles. The churches generally, having a name to live, but were

dead—"having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof—professing to know Christ, but in works denying him." This lamentable state of things, too generally existed, in the different churches and nations of the earth.—When, in the early part of the last century, God, in his wisdom and goodness, raised up the two Wesleys, John and Charles, George Whitefield, and a goodly number of other faithful witnesses; who stood forth as lights in a benighted land, zealously to testify of the grace of God, and to spread the doctrine of gospel truth, and to revive evangelical religion in the world. They made a firm and successful stand, and boldly attacked the strong holds of darkness, the errors of the times, and the vices of the age; which were so prevalent among both the clergy and the laity. God blessed their efforts, prospered their labours, and added to their strength, and to their numbers daily. Behold, they have spread into bands!

The Wesleys, and their coadjutors, were attacked on every side, and almost in every form, by principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. But they stood steadfast, in the support and defence of the apostles doctrine, with great patience and perseverance. We might give a catalogue of eminent and useful men, who were imployed, as colleagues and co-workers to-

gether, for many years, in this great and glorious revival of pure and undefiled religion; but for this, I refer you to Crowther's Portraiture of Methodism, to the Minutes of Conferences, and to the histories written by Wm. Myles, J. Lee, and others, upon this subject.

However, I will briefly notice the remarkable providence of God, in raising up that admirable and wonderful man, John Fletcher, who came to the help of the Lord against the mighty. He was an eminent and learned man, and one of the most holy and useful preachers of his day, and one of the most distinguished polemical writers of the age. Mr. Wesley acknowledged, that God had raised up John Fletcher, as a helper and assistant to him in this great work. In the year 1771, the Revd. Mr. Shirley, and nine or ten others, opposers of Mr. Wesley, and the Methodist doctrine, came to the Bristol Conference, in a body, and insisted upon a recantation of certain offensive points of doctrine, which had been published in the minutes of conference for 1770; and which had occasioned the publication of Mr. Shirley's famous circular letter. "They conversed freely about two hours, and found the Conference not such "dreadful heriticks" as they immagined; but tolerably sound in the faith." Mr. Wesley and the Conrfer-

ence, would not, and did not, recant any of the points or propositions, against which, Mr. Shirley, and his friends, so warmly protested. This brought on that great, and extraordinary, religious controversy; in which Mr. Fletcher, so remarkably and pre-eminently distinguished himself in polemical divinity. He came out, from the press, in open and bold defence of the Minutes, and of the doctrines therein contained. He appeared, as with gigantic strength of logical, argument accompanied by the irresistible evidence and testimony of the scriptures of truth. His learned opposers, one after another, took him in turn; Shirley, the two Hills, Toplady, and others, were all put to silence. Those masterly and unanswerable writings, I would recommend, to the attention of all, who wish to be settled, and established, in points of gospel truth, and scripture doctrines—especially, I would recommend them to all ministers, and dents of divinity. They are in six volumes, under the title of FLETCHER'S CHECKS. "Ah, Fletcher, many have done well, but thou hast done wonderously well."

In the time of this great revival of truth and religion, during the ardent struggles for the maintainance of the doctrines of the gospel of Christ, while many were successfully, and "*earnestly contending for the faith*,

once delivered to the saints", our Asbury, came forward, as a son in the gospel; being well instructed, by the best of preceptors, in the doctrines of grace, the genuine principles of the christian religion, both in theory, experience, and practice. At the Bristol Conference, above mentioned, in 1771, he had been travelling, as a preacher, about five years. We shall have further occasion, in this discourse, to notice, that it was at that conference, he was appointed to come to America. He was considered as settled and established in doctrines, sound in the faith, and well qualified for the Mission.

Like a David, the son of Jesse, a stripling in the armies of Israel, he ventured forth, to meet and encounter the gasconading Goliah, the giant of error and sin, which stalked through the land, putting at defiance the armies of the living God. Methinks, I can almost see him, with his shepherd's staff in hand, taking the five smooth stones of truth, out of the brook divine, putting them into his shepherd's bag, and with his gospel sling in his hand, going forth in the name of the living God, against the prince of the power of the air, who rules the children of disobedience. He took the sword of the spirit, the word of God, the shield of faith, the breast-plate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation; was girt about

with truth, shod with the preparation of the gospel; and then, praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance; he came forth in this glorious warfare, as a good soldier, to fight under the banner of Christ, against false doctrine, sin, and the divil. His *Motto* was, "*Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. Continue thou in these things, which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, know ingof whom thou hast learned of them. Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine; continue in them; give thyself wholly to them: for in so doing, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*"

His doctrines, are so fully known, that it may be a question, whether it is necessary to expatiate, particularly, upon their various branches. They embraced all those divine truths, contained in the sacred scriptures.—The bible, to him, was the book of books, and his grand confession of faith. He was careful to regulate, all his religious tenets and doctrines, by the book of God; and to discard every thing that was incompatible with the divine law and testimony. Mr. Wesley's Sermons, and Notes on the Scriptures, and Fletcher's Checks, exemplify his leading doctrines. The Articles of religion, in the Form of Discipline, and, what is com-

monly called, the Apostles Creed, contain a brief summary of his faith and doctrines.—In his public ministry, in his conference communications, and examinations of candidates, for the ministry; in his addresses to the Societies, in his private and social interviews, and in his sentimental conversations; we have often heard him, instructively and entertainingly, profess, declare, and enforce his opinions and doctrines. We have fully known them.

With fear and trembling, I almost shudder, at the idea of touching upon some of the awfully glorious doctrines of the gospel, which embrace his sublime and exalted views of the Infinity, and Eternity, of the divine perfections, and glorious attributes! The incomprehensible, and inexplicable fulness, of the adorable, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omnicient Deity! Whose divine wisdom, goodness, and power, brought all creation into existence; and wonderfully govern the universe! And are continually employed, in benevolent diffusions, and merciful distributions, of providential and gracious benefits, to all creation! The Being of a God, permit me to say, is so indisputably manifest, in all the visible works of nature, and in all the perceptible, and conceivable, volume of the universe; that an irresistible consciousness, of the Being of a God, and a

moral sense of Deity, is forcibly, and incontrovertibly, impressed upon the reason, the judgment, and the understanding of every intelligent creature! Hence, it appears to me, about as necessary, and as reasonable, to attempt to prove, the being of a God, by argument, as it is to light a candle, at noon day, to let men see that the sun shines; and to prove, thereby, the existence of the sun. It appears to me, that the power, the wisdom, the goodness, and the government, of the infinite God, in creation, and providence, is as conclusive, and indisputably manifest, to reason and consciousness, as the illumination, and warmth of the world, by the light and heat of the sun, is evident, to the corporeal sense, of seeing and feeling, that the sun exists, and gives light and heat!

It is, however, one thing to acknowledge God, and, like the Athenians, raise an altar, and make inscriptions, "To THE UNKOWN GOD;" but it is another thing, to *know him. The unknown God, whom many ignorantly worship; him we declare unto you. This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*"— "*Acquaint now, thyself with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee.*" "God hath made the world, and all things therein, he is Lord of heaven and of earth; he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

and hath made of one blood, all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth: for in him, we live, and move, and have our being." Forasmuch then, as we are all the offspring of God, we ought not to think lightly or irreverently of his Being, and sovereignty over us; and of our dependence on him, and obligations to him. Heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool! "*The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.*" O! that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto us the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of himself! The eyes of our understanding being enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power toward those who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, wrought in Christ, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." "The fulness of Him, that filleth all in all!" O! the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom, and knowledge, and power, and goodness of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

The *doctrine* of the *Trinity*—That great, and inexplicable, perhaps, inconceivable, mystery; of three persons, or personated offices, in the supernatural and divine operations, interpositions, and influences, of the *Infinite Spirit;* in the stupendous works of *creation*, *redemption*, and *sanctification;* and that *these three*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, *are One*, in the indivisible, unity of the eternal and infinite Deity. This sublime doctrine, he held and taught, as an article of the christian faith, founded in the scriptures of truth. "*There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*" And why should this doctrine be thought any more unreasonable, or difficult, to hold, and believe, on the ground of mystery; than to hold and believe, that every attribute, and every perfection of God, is an *infinite* attribute, and an *infinite* perfection; and yet, nevertheless, all the particular *infinite* attributes, and all the distinct *infinite* perfections of Deity, are *so many distinct infinites*, as applied to every particular perfection and attribute, and yet, are all comprehended in the *One*, *indivisible*, *Infinite Being?* O! the unsearchable, the incomprehensible, the boundless, the immeasurable, lengths, and breadths, and depths, and heights, and infinites, of the power, the wisdom, the goodness, the voli-

tion, the presence, and the free-agency, of the One Eternal, Infinite Jehovah! Filling an infinite expanse, or boundless space! And, filling an infinite duration, from eternity past, to eternity to come! As some have expressed it, "*Comprehending, One eternal now!*" For us to attempt to scan and test, the infinite possibilities, consistencies, connexions, and subsistences, with God, by our finite capacities, and limited views, is as fruitless and unreasonable, as an attempt to gather the boundless ocean, and contain it in the palm of our hand; or to stand on the earth, and touch the stars with our fingers. Oh! thou *Infinite of Infinities!* How unsearchable art thou! And thy being, thy perfections, and thy ways, past finding out! In awful reverence we prostrate before thee! And as we cannot comprehend thee, we desire, with profound adoration, to worship at thy feet! We prostrate before thee! We fear, we love, we worship and adore thee!

(The *doctrine* of the *fall of man*—He held that man had fallen, from his primeval innocency; and believed the universal depravity of human nature; that the whole posterity of Adam, were plunged into sin, and into a lost and helpless condition; unable to restore or save themselves, or even to perform any good work, acceptable to God,

"without the grace of God in Christ Jesus preventing them." All flesh hath corrupted their way; they have all gone out of the way; there is none that doeth good, no not one. "*By one man*, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all, for all have sinned." "The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the crown, wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores. The carnal mind, is enmity against God-being alienated, we are enemies to God by wicked works." This doctrine, we know he held and taught. It is truly a sad picture of human depravity; debased by sin, sunk into crimes, loaded with guilt, and under the sentence of death, condemned and wretched! Is there any hope of relief? Is there any prospect? Is there any promise of a Deliverer? O, yes! The Lord Jesus Christ, is able to bear, and strong to deliver. In the majesty of his divine power, he bruises the serpent's head, and wounds the dragon; he spoils the hosts of hell, and triumphs over sin, death, and the grave. He leads captivity, captive, and procures gifts, of grace, pardon, and salvation, even for the rebellious.

The *doctrine* of *redemption*—Of salvation, through the incarnation, life, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and interces-

sion, of our Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrine of a full, complete, and general atonement. That, through the merits and mediation of the adorable Saviour, there is free and full redemption and salvation, for all, and every one, who as a moral agent, will come, and accept it, upon gospel terms. This was a topic, on which his tongue, his heart, and his soul, delighted to dwell! Pleasing theme! Redemption through Christ; salvation for sinners!

How often have we heard him proclaim, in animated strains, and pathetic energy—"*Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death; crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man!*" "*The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they who live, should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him who died for them, and rose again*"—"that the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men"—"God is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance and live"—He held, he preached, he offered free mercy, and salvation, to every soul of man. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no plea-

sure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth"—"Who gave himself a *ransom for all*"—O, glorious news! Redeeming love! heavenly doctrine! And, "God be thanked for the unspeakable gift!" Of a divine Saviour! An all sufficient Saviour! A full and free salvation!

He held the *doctrine*, of the *Divinity of Christ*. In opposition to Deism, Arianism, Socinianism, and all the host of sceptical infidelity. For, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God—And, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.—In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily—The mighty God, the everlasting Father. God our Saviour; who gave himself a ransom for all.*"

He also held the *doctrine* of the *supernatural influences* of the Holy Ghost, upon the hearts and consciences of men, in *reproving the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*. It is by the diversity of the operations of the Holy Ghost, that the understanding is divinely illuminated, the will graciously renovated, and the affections of the heart become sanctified. It is the *Di-*

vine Spirit, that graciously excites, and religiously quickens, the moral sensibility, and the moral capacity of the human soul, to things spiritual and divine. *He shall receive of mine*, said Christ, *and shall shew it unto you—When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.* It is by the efficient influences of the Holy Spirit, that the soul is awakened, regenerated, justified, and sanctified. *The fruit of the Spirit, is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*—O Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from us! Uphold us by thy free Spirit! Enable us to live in the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and to mind the things of the Spirit! O, that, "The Spirit itself, may bear witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God!"

He also held, and constantly inculcated, the doctrine of "Repentance towards God, and of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;" and the necessity of a holy life, in obedience to the gospel of the grace of God; as the terms and conditions, upon which we obtain salvation. "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." And, "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." Ex-

perimental and practical religion, faith and good works; justification and sanctification; and a perseverance in holiness of heart and life, to the end; were, less or more, incorporated with, and enforced in most all his discourses. In the divine scheme and plan of sylvation, I consider that, the Love of God, is the moving cause; the atonement of Christ, is the meritorious cause; the supernatural influences of the Holy Ghost, the efficient cause; and repentance, faith, and obedience, the conditional cause of our salvation. What God, in his word, hath joined together, as so many links, in his gospel chain, let no man attempt to seperate, or put asunder. O, that we all, may be strong, and unfeigned in the faith! correct, and true, in opinion and doctrine! sound, and deep, in, christian experience! obedient, and pious, in holy living! and the God of peace, sanctify us wholly; and preserve our whole spirit, soul, and body, blameless!

His doctrine, of the immortality of the soul; future rewards and punishment; of a general resurrection; of an awful day of judgment; and of the eternity of the happiness of the righteous; and of the everlasting punishment of the wicked; are well known! Thereby, proclaimed abroad, as with a trumpet-voice; especially, in the applications of some of his most solemn, and most alarming dis-

courses! Death, judgment, heaven and hell, immortality and eternity! O! eternity! eternity! that awful sound! It is more terrifick, than the peals of roaring thunder! O God! let it sound with good effect in every ear; and with divine energy and power to every heart!

"*It is appointed man once for to die, and after death the judgment. The hour is coming, in the which, all that are in the graves, shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation! In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the trumphet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised! This corruptible, must put on incorruption; and this mortal, must put on immortality; then, death is swallowed up in victory. O, death! where is thy sting? O, grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!—The wicked, shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous, into life eternal. Alas! when the great day of his wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?*"

He rightly divided the word of truth, and gave to each his portion in due season. He had a doctrine, for the unrighteous impenitent sinner; a doctrine, for the broken hearted penitent mourner; a doctrine, for the be-

lieving, humble, loving christian; and, a doctrine, for every situation and station in life; and, for the variety of casuistical cases of conscience, and questions of moral and religious duty, so frequently occurring in the economy and concerns of the christian life and conduct, in doing and suffering the will of God. He was, in scriptural and casuistical theology, a Master in Israel; and a distinguished evangelical divine. Deservedly to be placed in the first class of patriarchal and apostolical theologians, pastors, and bishops.

We have fully known his doctrines, on all the great and essential points and details of the christian faith; and on all the important necessary duties of the christian life.—What he have, as christians, and ministers, to believe, to experience, to do, to endure, and to enjoy. Calculated to awaken the guilty consciences of sinners; to encourage and comfort the conflicting minds of desponding mourners; to build up and establish believers, in all the graces of the Spirit; to lead and direct the souls of men, in the sure way of salvation; and to set forth the honor, the praise, and the glory of God!

How remarkably different, are his doctrines, from the fanciful notions, the whimsical reveries, the hypothetical theories, and vain philosophical speculations, of unstable,

double-minded, enthusiastic, obstinate, or perverse men? Alas! we have to lament and mourn, that the world has so much abounded with false doctrines, unscriptural notions, incoherent opinions, and systems, and of dogmatisms of divers kinds; of those, who were "ever learning, and never able to come at the knowledge of the truth." "Professing to be wise, and knowing nothing as they ought to know." Being, "wiser in their own conceits, than seven, who can render a reason." Of whom it may be said, "To see a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool, than of that man." How lamentably has the world been deluded and blinded; the church perplexed, divided and distracted; and individuals deceived, led astray, and ruined; by the doctrines of Atheism, Deism, Arianism, Pelagianism, Antinomianism, Pharisaism, Socinianism? And by a numerous train of other, anti-scripturalisms; dangerous, mischievous, and destructive doctrines, of mistaken or wicked men. Against all such, he opposed his doctrines, of apostolic and scriptural truth. His warning voice, was lifted up, his voice of reproof, of counsel, and admonition, "*to banish, and drive away all erroneous, and strange doctrines contrary to God's word!*" And diligently to teach and enforce the wholesome scriptural doctrines,

of Jesus Christ, as the "*Life, the truth, and the way.*" Did he not, "withstand and convince the gainsayers?" "And privately and openly call upon and encourage others to do the same?"

But now, his voice is hushed into silence! We shall no more hear it proclaim the *joyful sound!* But, we can never forget the sacred truths, we have so often heard him utter. Being dead, he yet speaketh to our recollection. It appears, again, as though his presence were hovering about us, and his spirit, as it were, whispering to our imagination. "My weeping children, my mourning brethren, I have left you in tears and sorrow; but I have left you *my doctrine*, as a precious valuable legacy! See that you never forget, nor forsake, my counsels, instructions, examples, and doctrines!"

Brethren, "*Let us give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*" "*Let us earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered to the Saints.*" To be more particular and minute, upon the whole system of his doctrine, in all the points of theology, and on all the various details, of his public and private instructions, including the full scope of his tenets, opinions, positions, and principles; would be to give a voluminous body of divinity, better suited to a folio publication,

to be read and studied, in schools of theology, and private studies, for weeks and months, than to the time, accasion, and circumstances of a funeral discourse. Suffice it to say, he held all the doctrines of the gospel of Christ, as true and divine, solid and substantial, pure and uncorrupted, heavenly and glorious! Involving, and comprehending, the benevolent purposes of God, in the most essential and eternal interests of man; ralative to the salvation of his soul, to his genuine and intrinsic happiness in time, and to his permanent felicity, and enjoyment of God, in eternity.

O, may we ever believe, love, and obey, the glorious doctrines contained in the Scriptures, as the truths of God! They shall stand, when the world shall sink and disappear. "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a jot or tittle of God's word shall fail.*" When the elements shall melt with fervent heat; and the heavens and the earth shall pass away with a great noise; then, in the wreck of elements, and crush of worlds, the word of God shall stand secure! And the doers of the word, will be safe, and abide forever! They shall shout, above the fiery void! "*They shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall ever be with the Lord!*" "O, glorious, celestial doctrine! While it brings life and immortality to light;

it unfolds the celestial doors of paradise, opens the gates of heaven, and reveals to the eye of faith, ten thousand unspeakable charms, unutterable delights, and ineffable glories! It directs and guides, the steps of the christian, as a light to his feet, and a lamp to his paths, in the way of faith, hope, and love, up the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of his holiness, to the tabernacle of his presence, and to the habitation of his glory! The contemplation, the anticipation, is overwhelming! It excites profound adoration, with astonishment and wonder! O happy! thrice happy place! eternally happy! There, my brethren, in that splendid world, of celestial spirits, we may expect to meet our departed friend, shining as a bright star, or as the sun in the firmament! "*They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father!*" O, the anticipation of ineffable bliss! Our hearts, and tongues, praise the Lord! And all within us magnify his holy name! Hosanna! Hallelujah! forever and ever!

Thou hast fully known, not only, my doctrine; but, MANNER OF LIFE. St. Paul's *manner of life*, is left on record, as written by St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles; and

also, in his own Epistles, to the different churches, and persons, to whom he wrote. "*My manner of life, said he, from my youth, which was at first among mine own nation, at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, who knew me from the beginning, that after the most strict sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. And now, I stand, and am judged, for the hope of the promise, made of God, unto our fathers.*" He then proceeds, to give an account, of his wretchedness by nature, of his awakening, to a discovery of his lost condition, and of his conversion, and call to the ministry, and apostleship; also of his preaching, his travels, and his labours, both among the Jews and the Gentiles. And, while speaking, king Agrippa, was almost persuaded to be a christian. In other places, he says, "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner, I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord, with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewn you, and have taught you, publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish

my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." "Ye know, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we have lived among you."

The Apostle gave an account of his manner of life, previous to his conversion to God; also of his conversion, embracing the christian faith, his call to the apostleship and ministry; likewise, his holy living, great labours, long sufferings, tedious travels, painful persecutions, and anxious cares, in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This example, of the apostle, might be a sufficient apology, if any were necessary, and pleaded in justification, for giving, and publishing, narratives, or memoirs, of the experience and lives of pious and eminent christians and servants of God.

When we review St. Paul's manner of life, and follow him by land and water, in adversity and prosperity, among friends and enemies; through Asia and Europe, among Jews and Gentiles; at Damascus, Jerusalem, and the coasts of Judea; at Antioch, Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, and Philippi, Athens, and Rome; through Lesser Asia, Greece, and Italy; preaching the gospel; forming, constituting, and regulating, christian societies and churches; ordaining

elders, and deacons, and putting things in regular order; giving directions, advice, and counsel; and having the care of all the churches upon him. Have we not the *prototype*, or the *archetype*, of the *manner of life*, of our late venerable bishop Asbury? That is, the *original exemplar*, in *Paul*, of the surprising *copy*, in *Asbury?* Or the *original drawn by Paul*, of which a striking *resemblance is made by Asbury?* I am persuaded, that the propriety of this remark, will be admitted, by those who have, attentively, examined both; who have carefully, and impartially compared the *copy* with the *original*. Is not the resemblance plain, and the imitation striking?

I am almost at a loss, where to begin, and how to proceed, in giving a sketch (for such only it can be at this time) of the extraordinary, and wonderful, *manner of life*, of the venerable and very distinguished Francis Asbury. It is almost, if not altogether, impossible to give a narrative of his life and character, without incorporating with it, in some degree, the history of the Methodist Episcopal church. The one, is so intimately and essentially connected with the other, that they cannot well be separated, without injustice to the subject. The *Memoirs* of his life, must necessarily contain a considerable history of the Methodist church in Ameri-

ca. And a faithful history of the church, must, as necessarily, give a history of his life. Also, permit me here to observe, that, while treating on *his manner of life*, we shall be led, to touch upon some things, already noticed, under the head of *doctrines*: for, in a great degree, the force and influence of his doctrines, upon his own believing heart, and mind, governed the leading actions, and the whole deportment of his life. Likewise, while on this part of the subject, we may have occasion, and it may be necessary, to touch, at times, upon his *purposes*, *faith*, *long-suffering*, *charity*, *patience*: for these, are so closely connected with each other, that we cannot separate them, as perfectly distinct from each other. Yet, nevertheless, we shall endeavour to take a particular view of each, under distinct heads, in the order they lie before us, in the text. In this view of the case, and from these considerations, it must be expected, that while treating on one part of the subject, we shall occasionally have to refer to the other parts.

His Biography, or Memoirs, ought to be, and no doubt will be, written and published, by some able hand, well furnished with materials, and documents; and, capable of doing him more ample justice, than my knowledge, recollection, feeble abilities, or time, at present, will admit of. His character,

his life, eminent piety, great fidelity, remarkable diligence, astonishing labours, and extraordinary usefulness; should be recorded, perpetuated, and transmitted, to posterity, and future generations; as a MEMENTO, or monument, and durable memorial, of departed worth; and in memory of the pious dead. That christians, and christian ministers, in ages yet to come, may read and look at it, as an example for them to follow, and as a *Monitor*, to stimulate them to their duty. For ages, and generations, may pass away, without producing another Francis Asbury. Posterity, yet unborn, may have cause to praise God, that such a man ever lived.

Of his juvenile years, perhaps, it is not necessary to say much. In this sketch, of his life, you are not to expect a pompous detail of a splendid family; nor a narrative of a dignified genealogy—He had no royal or noble descent, proudly to boast of; no affluent distinguished ancestors, vainly to speak of; no dignitaries, statesmen, or court-favorites, as family connections, and patrons, to notice and push him forward into life, or raise him to honor, to fame, and promotion. With the blessing of God, by means of his own correct and circumspect deportment; his diligent improvement, of his own mind and talents; a wise application of his understanding and knowledge, to the best pur-

poses, and to accomplish the best ends; and, by a steadfast adherence to correct principles, and a virtuous perseverance in well doing, he rose to a high reputation in society, and gained an eminent standing in the church of God; as a distinguished bishop, and a man of extraordinary usefulness.

His parents, *Joseph* and *Elizabeth Asbury*, were not wealthy; but they enjoyed the comforts of common life. They were not much known in the world; but sustained the reputation of honest, industrious, and reputable poor people. His father, was employed by two of the most wealthy families, in the neighbourhood, in the capacity of farmer and gardener: the occupation which all our first parents followed. The superintendance, and cultivation of gardens, and tillage of the earth, was the first employment of man. This appears to have been the occupation, or business, pursued by Adam. Perhaps, in the garden of Eden, and, afterward, in the adjacent or neighbouring fields. "*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; the Lord God sent him forth, from the garden of Eden, to till the ground.*"

Francis Asbury, was born, according to the best account we have, in the month of August, in the year of our Lord, Seventeen Hundred and Forty-five. Not far from

Birmingham, in the parish of Handsworth, County of Staffordshire, England. His mother was a pious woman, and lived in the fear of the Lord. She, as all mothers ought to do, paid early attention to the education of her son; especially, to his moral and religious instructions. His mind, like the tender twig or scion, was early bent, and well inclined, by the moral precepts, and religious examples, of his judicious and pious mother. He began to read the scriptures, about the sixth year of his age. From his childhood, he neither dared to swear an oath, or to tell a lie. He felt an abhorrance at the vile mischief, and profane wickedness of other boys; whose evil company, and hateful practices, he avoided, as much as his situation in life would possibly admit. Such was the rectitude of his moral principles; such was the effect of prudent parental instructions.

Like Timothy, from a child, he knew the Holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ; and like Timothy, who had been taught by his grand-mother *Lois*, and his mother *Eunice*, so he was taught by his mother *Elizabeth*, "one of the tenderest of parents," to fear God and keep his commandments. Noble, and worthy example; which ought to be followed, by all parents,

and preceptors of children. God will bless such parents, and their offspring. O, parents! as little as ye may reflect on it, or lay it to heart, the foundation of your children's happiness, or misery, for time, and eternity, is, no doubt, often laid in the days of their childhood! Many parents, I fear, will have an awful account to give, in the great day of eternity, for their improper conduct, in rearing up their children; and for the neglect of timely, wholesome instruction, and godly discipline. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." O, parents! reflect on your responsibility to society, your accountability to your God, and your obligations and duty to your little ones: their *souls*, as well as their bodies! Take warning, lest your inconsiderate conduct, and improper discipline, be accessary to the ruin, and destruction, of your children, both here, and hereafter! Pious and timely attention, may lay the foundation, of their present and eternal happiness! But to return to Asbury.

About the usual age, of binding out boys to business, according to the custom in England, he was put an apprentice, to learn a mechanical trade; or a branch of business, in the art of working and manufacturing metals: like a Tubal-Cain, who was, "an

artificer in brass and iron." Thereby, to be qualified to earn his own bread, and to get his own living, as a useful member of the community; and to administer to his own wants, by the industry and labour of his own hands, in an independent and respectable manner. Like a Paul, who had learnt the art of tent making, and thereby, his own hands were able to administer to his own wants and necessities. All children should be taught some useful trade, or business—It is supposed, that our Saviour himself was a mechanic.

About the age of fourteen, Asbury was graciously awakened to a clear and deep sense of spiritual and divine things; to see the need of a Saviour, and the way of salvation; he gave himself much to reading, to prayer, and to an attendance on the public and private means of grace. He, though young, was not disobedient to the heavenly visitation; he yielded, he sought, and he found, pardon and peace, mercy and salvation, by faith, through Christ, in the days of his youth. Like young Samuel, Josiah, Timothy, and others, he "remembered his Creator in the days of his youth;" and early dedicated himself, his time, and his talents to the Lord. He joined the Methodist society, about the same time, and was so pious, humble, and circumspect, in his deportment,

that he gained, and retained, the utmost confidence of the preachers and the people; which he uniformly maintained throughout his life. The venerable Bishop Whatcoat, who knew him well from the beginning, used to relate, some interesting anecdotes of him, in evidence of his remarkable youthful sobriety, steady habits, and upright deportment, which arrested general attention. It used to be said, when he was a boy, "Little Frank, generally goes to, and returns from meeting alone." He was fond of solitary retirement.

He soon became a class leader, and made such improvements in his gifts and talents, that when he was about sixteen, or seventeen, years of age, he was admitted, and authorised, by the consent and approbation of his brethren, to be a local preacher. His mind was greatly drawn out, with deep concern, to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come; and to point them to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Now began his early gospel labours. He used to preach three or four times a week, visiting almost every place, within his reach, where there was an opening for him. On Sabbath days, and on week day evenings, he used to walk considerable distances, to pray with, and to preach to the people, and to exhort and warn them, to turn from their

sins, and the error of their ways, unto the living and the true God, and to seek the salvation of their souls. Thus early in life, in the bloom of youth, he "*gave diligence to shew himself approved unto God.*" Amiable youth! God owned, and blessed him abundantly.

It ought to be noted, and permit me to call your attention to the remark; That, generally, those who have become the most eminent and distinguished, for piety and usefulness, in the church of God, have been of those, who embraced religion early in life; who remembered their Creator in the days of their youth, and devoted their time and their talents to God, while young. O, ye young people, reflect on this, and lay it to heart! Now, in the bloom of your days, set out in religion, be faithful to God, and take care of your souls!—That, if you should live to be old, you may look back upon a well spent life, devoted to pious and useful purposes! When declining nature, under the weight of years, is bowed down; or under affliction, shall be bending toward the grave; when your heads shall be frosted with age, and the snowy blossoms of grey hairs, bespeak the approach of mortality and death. Then, how inexpressible the pleasure; how unspeakable the delight; how indescribable the consolation; to be able to review a pious life, from your youthful days, dedicated to God, to religion, and to a preparation for

death and eternity! And, when borne down, with sickness, infirmities, affliction, or age, and you lay your heads upon a dying pillow; then, to look forward, in the assurance of faith, with a well grounded hope, to an endless and uninterrupted felicity; Who can describe, nay, who can conceive of, the unspeakable comforts and joys of such a transporting anticipation! O, that all my aged hearers, and those in middle life, had but the consolation, of reviewing the years, and the time that is gone, as having been spent in the service of God, and the work of religion! Permit me to warn you, this day, one and all, that you have no time to lose; death is on his way; perhaps at the threshold of the door! "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!" "No room for mirth and trifling here, if life so soon is gone!"

After young Asbury had been labouring, as a local preacher, four or five years, then, about the age of twenty one, he gave himself up, intirely to the work of the ministry, as an itinerant preacher. In the year of our Lord, 1766, at the Conference, in Leeds, he was approved, and appointed to a circuit, as a travelling preacher, in the Methodist connexion. Mr. Wesley, speaking of that conference, in his Journal, says, "A happier one we never had, nor a more profitable one." "It both began and ended in love,

and with a solemn sense of the presense of God."

I am here disposed to notice, a particular coincidence, of two remarkable events; that is, in the simultanious commencement of the regular, itinerant, ministerial life and labours, of Francis Asbury, with the beginning and rise of Methodism, in America; or, the formation of the first Methodist societies in this country, and the beginning of Asbury's itinerant ministry. Both of those important events to mankind, and to the cause of religion, took place, the same identical year. As though the Lord, in his wise purposes, and benevolent designs, had raised up the man for the work, and prepared the work for the man. It was in 1766, that Philip Embury, a local preacher, from Ireland, formed the first methodist society in the city of New York; and about the same time, Robert Strawbridge, another local preacher, from Ireland, formed a society, in Frederick county, State of Maryland. That very same year, 1766, Francis Asbury, joined the British conference, as an itinerant preacher, and a gospel missionary. We may safely suppose, in the purpose of God, he was raised up for the express design of being selected, and set apart, as the American apostle; and evangelist to come over, in due time, to take the oversight and superintendance, of

the great and glorious work, at that time, beginning to take root, and to spread, in America; and to evangelize the wilderness and the solitary places in this "New world." A certain passage, of sacred history, once applied to a very different case, might perhaps, be applied, with some degree of propriety, on this occasion, to express the benevolent purpose of God. "*Even for this same purpose*, have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth." "I have appeared unto thee for *this purpose*, to make thee a minister and a witness." "He is a *chosen vessel*, to bear my name among the Gentiles, and the children of Israel."

I am inclined, under an impressive solemnity of mind, to notice another remarkable circumstance; and to make a few observations upon it. From the year of 1766, the time, when his itinerant ministry, and the glorious work in America, began, up to the year 1816, the time of his death, makes fifty years; the half of one century, or a Jubilee. Among the Jews, by the order of God, the fiftieth year, was a year of release, a year of return, a year of rest, that is, a *Jubilee*.—They had their Sabbaths of days, their Sabbaths of years, and their *Jubilees*.—"Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years, seven

times seven years, and the space of the seven sabbaths of years, shall be unto thee forty and nine years. The fiftieth year, it shall be a Jubilee unto you. In the year of this Jubilee, ye shall return every man unto his possession."—The Jubilee, may be considered as typical of the heavenly rest.—When the saints of God, shall be released from all their toils, afflictions, labours, and sufferings, their Jubilee will then commence; they shall return to their celestial possessions, their incorruptible inheritance, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.—The application is plain. Asbury, had laboured, and suffered, and toiled, as the servant of the church, as *the servant of all*, his forty-nine years; this present year, 1816, was his fiftieth year in the public itinerant ministry; he is now released, returned, and discharged, from all his work, and afflictions; and has returned, and gone, to his inheritance, and possession; and entered into the rest that remains for the people of God.—Hail! happy soul! "Thy year of Jubilee is come.—Thy grand sabbatic year, the Jubilee of heaven!"

Let us now review the providential dispensation, in preparing a work and a field, for him to cultivate and superintend, in America; and his divine call, to the work and peculiar qualification for it; and also the

admirable openings, directions, and blessings of Providence, in bringing him to it, in keeping, supporting, and prospering him in it. The first Methodist societies, formed in America, had no regular travelling preachers, to take the charge and oversight of them. They were first formed, then watched over, and, under God, taken care of, for a time, by local preachers. Yes, brethren, let it be remembered, that the beginning of the great work of God, among us, by the divine blessing, was through the instrumentality of local brethren. Which, with other considerations, should lead us to respect, and esteem, the local preachers, as a useful, and most valuable order of men among us; to whom, the connexion, under God, is greatly indebted. God has owned them, and he will own them; and we are in duty bound to own, and acknowledge them, as a constituent part of the ministry among us. Then, "Let us provoke one another to love and to good works." "Keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

In New York, where the first society was formed, by Philip Embury, whose labours were crowned with success, they received considerable assistance from Captain Webb, a military officer, and Barrick master, at Albany; who being converted to God, became a zealous and useful preacher of the gospel;

and, singularly and strangely as it may appear, sometimes preached in his regimental uniform. Some of you recollect him, for he visited, and preached, in Philadelphia. The first time he went to the society room, in New-York, the members were considerably surprised, and somewhat alarmed, at seeing an officer, in his martial dress, enter among them; not knowing but he might have some unfriendly design toward them; for, at that time, they were a poor, despised, and persecuted people, and had but few friends. But, when they saw him conform to their mode of worship, and devoutly join them in singing, and kneeling, and prayer, they were, more than ever, surprised, and struck with astonishment, gladness, and joy. —He united with them, and zealously used all his influence and talents, to promote so good a cause.

The society increased in numbers, in friends, and in strength; so that in the year 1768, they began to build the first Methodist chapel, in America; which is yet standing, in John-Street, New-York. About that time, they made application to Mr. Wesley, to send over help; particularly some regular preachers to assist them, and to take the charge and oversight of the great work of God, then beginning, in America, to take root, and to spread. At the Leeds Confe-

rence, in 1769, Mr. Wesley, mentioned th
case; and two of the preachers, Richar
Boardman, and Joseph Pilmoor, willingl
offered themselves for the service; and ac
cordingly were appointed, and came ove
They were the first, regular Methodis
preachers, sent to this country, by Mr. Wes
ley. They landed here in Philadelphia, th
latter part of the year 1769; and brough
with them a present of fifty pounds sterling
as a donation to the society of New-York
as a token of brotherly love, toward payin
the expenses of the chapel, which they ha
been building. Mr. Pilmoor, is now living
and a respectable minister of the Protestan
Episcopal church, in this city, Philadelphia
They preached, in New-York, Philadelphia
and in various other places, both in town
and country, north and south. During thei
time, this church, St. George's, where w
are now assembled, was procured, as a Me
thodist chapel; though, at that time, in
very unfinished, and poor condition. Som
of you well remember, the times and cir
cumstances of which I am speaking, and o
which, I can only give, on this occasion, a fe
brief touches. Since then—O! what has Go
wrought? what has he done for *us*, as a people

In the year, 1771, at the August confe
rence, held in Bristol, Mr. Wesley, propose
sending more help to America. Franci

Asbury, who had been travelling about five years, and, having had great exercises about coming to America, then voluntarily offered his services, as a missionary, to come over to what was then, sometimes, called the "new world," to traverse the wilderness, the mountains, and the solitary places, to seek after the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The offer was accepted, and he was accordingly approved, appointed, and sent over. Previous to that conference, he had his serious exercises, and leading impressions, perhaps a divine call, that he should visit America. And, does it not appear, that the great Shepherd, and Bishop of souls, evidently designed and purposed him for the work in this country? Had he not a call from God? Was he not divinely directed, and providentially sent among us?

It was at that conference, in Bristol, 1771, that the Revd. Mr. Shirley, and nine or ten others, met, to insist upon the recantation of certain offensive propositions in the minutes, of 1770, and which, brought on the famous controvercy, before mentioned, in which, the extraordinary Fletcher, so pre-eminently distinguished himself.

We have understood, that some of the elder preachers, made some objections to Asbury's coming, because of his youth, and want of more experience; but Mr. Wesley,

who well knew the man, his *doctrines*, *manner of life*, talents, zeal, firm integrity, and qualifications, for a Missionary, resolved to send him, into "the new world," so called, to seek after the lost sheep in the wilderness, and to take the oversight of the societies, and the work of religion, then springing up, in America. "Where the eyes of the blind were to be opened, the ears of the deaf were to be unstopped, the lame was to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb was to sing. In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.—The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty lands springs of water."

He returned home, from the Bristol conference, to take leave of his mother, and other friends, and to bid them all an affecting and final farewell. He said, "It was grievous to flesh and blood, but was borne with divine assistance."—After visiting, and parting with his friends, in Staffordshire, and other places, he returned to Bristol; and on the second day of September, 1771, he left his native country, which he was to see no more, to come and serve us, and the cause of religion, in the church of God. This was leaving all to follow Christ. In a perspective view, I can almost see his pious affectionate mother, in a flood of tears, weaping, while parting with her only son—

never! no, never, to see his face again! How affecting the scene? How heart rending, such a parting, to see each others faces no more.

In his journal, while on the Ocean, he writes, "Whither am I going? What to do? —To gain honor or to get money? No; I am "going to live to God, and to bring others "so to do. If God does not acknowledge "me in America, I will return to England. "I know my views are upright—may they "never be otherwise! May my Lord pre- "serve me in an upright intention!"—He had his trials, and troubles, on the deep, as may be seen in his journal.

On the 27th of October, 1771, he and Richard Wright, who came with him, landed in this city, Philadelphia; and in the evening, attended divine worship, in this church, where we are now assembled, on the occasion of his death. Yes, where we are now performing the mournful solemnities of his funeral, was the place, where he first met with a congregation of his American brethren, "Who received him as an angel," or a messenger of God. His first sermon, among us, was preached from these very appropriate words—*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*—And his second was equally pertinent.—*For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of:*

for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. Here began his union, his labours, his cares, and his sufferings among us. Since which time, *we have fully known his manner of life;* we have known him as a man, as a christian, as a friend, as a minister, and as a general superintendant of the church of Christ. On Nov. 7th, 1771, he left Philadelphia on a visit to New-York. He preached at Burlington, and other places, on his way, through New-Jersey, and Staten-Island. On the 12th of Nov. he arrived in York. He then began more fully to enter into his American Missionary work. Richard Boardman, Joseph Pilmoor, and Richard Wright, were his colleagues; making, at that time, only four regular travelling preachers—It must, however, be recollected, that the local preachers, with whom the work first began, were useful helpers in promoting it; and were co-workers together with the itinerant preachers.

In 1773, Thomas Rankin, and George Shadford, came over from England; and, in 1774, Boardman, and Pilmoor, returned.—In 1775, J. Dempster, and M. Rodda, came over; and, in 1777, Rankin, and Rodda, returned. In 1778, Shadford returned. Beside those, who came from England, the chief part of whom returned again, there

were a number of our own citizens, raised up, among ourselves, as labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord. The fields were truly white unto the harvest, and the Lord put it into the hearts of a goodly band of pious brothers, zealous young men, to turn out, into the harvest of the Lord, as labourers, to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. They went forth as flames of fire, as lights, in a benighted land. There was a Waters, a Ruff, a Gatch, a Garrettson, and many others, as will appear by the Minutes of the Conferences, who, one after another, entered into the work of God. There soon arose a cloud of witnesses, a little army of the soldiers of Christ, combined together, as of one heart, and of one mind, to strive together for the faith of the gospel; the weapons of whose warfare, were not carnal, but mighty through God, pulling down strong holds, high thoughts, vain imaginations, and whatsoever exalteth itself against God.—There was a great work to do, much prejudice and powerful opposition to meet with, formidable difficulties to encounter, and severe troubles, persecutions, and conflicts to endure; sufficient to have discouraged men, who were not strong in faith, patient in hope, abundant in love, and zeal; and of great courage, resolution, and firmness. But this united band, of faithful brothers, with an

Asbury at their head, pressed forward, struggled on, and pushed through, fiery trials, which were to try them, and did try them, as though some strange thing happened unto them; but they went on, rejoicing, inasmuch as they were made partakers of Christ's sufferings. With patient perseverance, they faced a frowning world, as with their lives in their hands, and braved every storm, and endured every tempest, either from the world, the devil, principalities and powers, or spiritual wickedness in high places.

During the seven years, of the revolutionary war, between 1775, and 1783, they had, more especially, almost insupportable difficulties, violent oppositions, bitter persecutions, and grievous sufferings to endure. So many of the preachers being Englishmen; and Mr. Wesley, who was considered the founder, and chief ruler, of the Methodist societies, and his directions, opinions, and advices, having great influence upon their rules of conduct in America; and he being in England, and known to be a loyal man to his king, and of course, unfriendly to the American measures and revolution; these things, occasioned jealousies and suspicions to arise among many, that the methodists were, politically, a dangerous people. Also, the moral views, the religious principles, and

the consciencious scrupels, of the people called Methodists, not being favorable, on general principles, to the spirit and practice of war; on this ground also, the temper and spirit of the times, combining with other prejudices and passions of the day, excited jealousies and suspicions, which occasioned an evil report, of alarm, to be raised and propagated, that the methodists, preachers and people, were unfriendly, and opposed, to the American revolution. However untrue, or incorrect, those inferences were, against the methodists, as drawn from the premises; yet, nevertheless, perhaps, some of them were to blame. I do not hesitate to admit the improper conduct of some. I feel no disposition to conceal it, that a few of the preachers, were imprudent, and reprehensible, in some things; and gave too much cause for such suspicions. Rodda, in particular, acted improperly, and quit the country, in 1777, under circumstances unfavorable to his reputation, as a preacher of the gospel, and hurtful to the cause of religion. Captain Webb, also, did not act so well as he ought to have done; as a christian preacher, nay, even as a British officer, his conduct was exceptionable. Rankin, likewise, had spoken so freely, and imprudently on public affairs, that it excited jealous fears, that his opinions and influence would be of dangerous

consequences to the American cause. However, he left the country, in 1777, more honorable to himself, and not so hurtful to his brethren.

We forbear to mention others. And, although I am not disposed, at present, to pass any judgment, or to pronounce any sentence against them; yet, I can make no apology for their imprudence and indiscretion, sufficient to justify them fully; but, must view their conduct, as it was then considered, by Asbury, and others, as exceptionable and unjustifiable.—But so it was, that the way of the preachers, on every side, was almost hedged up; and for a considerable time, it was with the utmost difficulty, and at the greatest risk, of personal safety, that they could travel and preach at all.

In 1778, when the times, perhaps, were about the worst, Asbury and Shadford, agreed, to make it a matter of fasting and prayer, for direction, in their straits and difficulties, what to do; whether to stay in the country, or return to England.—After the season of fasting and prayer; Shadford, concluded, and observed, that he had an answer to leave the country, and return to England; but Asbury, who received an answer to stay, replied, "If you are called to go, I am called to stay; so we must part."—Accordingly they parted, to meet no more on earth. From

that moment, he made America, his country, and his home. He resolved to abide among us, and at the risk of all, even of life itself, to continue, to labour, and to suffer, with, and for, his American brethren.

Oppositions, reproaches, and persecutions, rushed in against them, from every quarter, in various forms, like a tempest and a flood. During the whole period of conflict and danger, *his manner of life*, was irreproachable. His prudence and caution, as a man and a citizen; his pious and correct deportment as a christian and a minister; was such, as to put at defiance, the suspicious mind, and the tongue of persecuting slander. They were never able to substantiate any allegation, or the appearance of a charge, against him, that was incompatible with the character of a citizen, a christian, or a faithful minister of the gospel. He never meddled with politicks.

But in those days, of suspicion and alarm, to get a preacher, or a society, persecuted, they only had to excite suspicion, sound the alarm, and cry out, "Enemies to the country! or, tories!" To enflame the passions of hot-headed, and unreasonable men, they had to raise a clamour and drive on furiously, like Jehu of old, to put the mob into motion, and to excite the passions, to insult, to rudeness, or outrage; which is the work, generally, of ignorant, violent, or wicked men! If the

expression be admissible, I feel inclined to use it, that, "I love to hate," the principles, and the practices, of persecution, violence, and "mobs." God deliver us from them all! The Methodists, at one period, were generally called tories, by those who either knew not the people, or the meaning of the word.

I am inclined to recite a few cases, as a specimen, of what the brethren had to encounter, in those days of distress, that tried men's souls, and put their integrity and firmness, their stability and sincerity to the test. I shall not give a minute review, of all their persecutions and sufferings, throughout the States of the Union. The time and occasion, only admits, and calls for, a few brief statements. I shall principally confine myself to Maryland, my native State, where I was best acquainted, and where, probably, their sufferings were as great, perhaps greater, than in any other State. The prejudices of the people there, ran high, and some of the laws, to meet the exigencies of the times, were hard and oppressive; and some of the rulers, and civil officers, appeared disposed to construe, and enforce, every apparent legal restriction, with rigor and oppression, against the Methodists, who were then, a persecuted and a despised people.

Some of the preachers, were mulct or fined,

and thrown into costs; and others were imprisoned, for no other crime, or offence, than travelling and preaching the gospel; and others, were bound over in bonds, and heavy penalties, with sureties, not to preach in this, or that county. Several, were arrested, and committed to the common county jail. Others, were personally insulted, and badly abused, in different ways—And some, were beaten with stripes and blows, nigh unto death, who carried their scars down to the grave. Our aged and much respected brother, Freeborn Garrettson, now present, and sitting among us, knows the truth of these statements; for he was then among them, and was, himself, one of the sufferers. He was, for preaching the gospel, committed to prison, in one county, and severely beaten with blows, and wounded, even to the shedding of blood, nigh unto death, in another. My father, and my brother Garrettson, you, with your fellow-sufferers, endured these things, for the testimony of Jesus.—You yet live, but where are the others? Nearly all of your old colleagues, and suffering brethren, are gone to reap the reward of their labours and long-sufferings. "These are they, who came through much tribulation, having washed their garments white in the blood of the Lamb."

To give a further view of those trying

scenes, and times of distress, I will briefly state a few prominent instances, and particular cases, to serve as a specimen, to shew what our first preachers had to endure and suffer, while first planting the gospel among us. In the city of Annapolis, the capital of the State, Jonathan Forrest, and William Wren, and I believe at different times, two or three others, were committed to jail.—Three of the men, who were principally concerned, in taking up, and committing, brother Wren, afterward became methodists, among whom, was one of the magistrates, who wrote, or signed, the mittimus for his commitment. I knew them well, and shall never forget the serious and solemn time, when brother Wren and myself, with the man who arrested him, in company, dined at the magistrates house, after they joined the methodists. In Prince George's county, P. G. a preacher, was, by a mob, shamefully maltreated; "honored," according to the cant of the times, " with tar and feathers." In Queen-Anns, Joseph Hartley, was bound over, in penal bonds, of five hundred pounds, not to preach in the county; Thomas Segar, yet living, was one of his sureties.—In the same county, Freeborn Garrettson, was beaten with a stick, by one of the county Judges, and pursued, on horse back, till he fell from his horse, and was nearly killed.—

n Talbott county, Joseph Hartley, was whipped, by a young lawyer, and was imprisoned a considerable time. He used to preach, during his confinement, through the grates, or window, of the jail, to large concourses of people, who, on Sabbath days, used to attend to hear the prisoner preach. They frequently came, from ten to fifteen miles, to hear him, and even from other counties. His confinement, produced a great excitement upon the public mind; and God overruled it for good, to the souls of many. Christ was preached, and numbers embraced religion. Even his enemies, at length, were glad to have him discharged.—In Dorchester, Caleb Pedicord, was whipped, and badly hurt, upon the public road; he carried his scars down to the grave.—In the same county, brother Garrettson, was committed to jail.—In Caroline, a preacher (T. C.) was taken up in a lawless manner, and put into the custody of the sheriff, to be taken to jail; but there was no mittimus, for his commitment, nor any legal cause for his detention, or regular process against him; however, the sheriff, prudently received him into his care and protection, from the rage of his enemies; and after giving him a hospitable entertainment in his own house, discharged and let him go.—In the same county, Joseph Foster, the father of Thomas

Foster, so well known to many of you, was brought before the court, arraigned at the bar, and thrown into troubles, expences, and costs.

Upon this last case, I feel inclined to state part of a short address, made by old brother Foster, to the court, as stated to me by himself. Such a man, said he, has lodged an information against me, and upon oath hath said, that "he *heard me preach the gospel.*" But, I am strongly persuaded, that he does not *know* what the *gospel is;* nay, I am confident that he does not, unless his soul is converted to God; and of this, there are the strongest reasons to doubt. For if his soul was converted to God, he would not persecute religion, nor lodge an information of complaint, against a minister, for preaching the gospel. Now, if he is an unconverted man, he does not know what the gospel is; and if he does not know what the gospel is, how could he swear, that he heard me preach it? And now, if he were interrogated, before the court, I do not believe that he could tell, what the the gospel is, nor what he heard me preach. And if so, what does his oath amount to? If it be so, that he is an unconverted man, and ignorant of the gospel, a stranger to the subject, and unacquainted with religion, how could he swear, that, *I preached the gospel*?

In another case, where the witness was interrogated—"Did you hear Mr. P. preach *the gospel?*" "I heard him preach; but I do not know, whether it *was the gospel*, or not." —"What did he say, when you heard him?" —"I cannot so recollect, as to repeat his words."—Mr. P. then proposed, by permission, that he himself would tell what he had said: for he was neither afraid nor ashamed. Liberty being granted—he then began, with the fall, the wickedness, and the guilt of man; he proceeded, to the redemption wrought out for man by Jesus Christ; the offer of salvation, to perishing sinners; and then came on the subject, of repentance, faith, conversion, and obedience to God; without which, hell and destruction would be the portion of every sinner: upon which, he was interrupted, like Paul by a guilty trembling Felix, "Stop! stop! we have enough of that!" How hard it is, for sinners to hear the truth?

We might, perhaps, with propriety, notice some other cases, in the different counties and States, both north and south, of the sufferings, both of preachers and members; but time would fail us, to be minute, in recitals and details. From these brief sketches, some tolerably correct, though faint idea may be formed, of what our first preachers, and fathers, and brethren, had to contend with, to bear, to endure, and to suffer. O!

how great their agonizing conflicts! They spent their all, their time, their sweat, their blood, and their lives, to win, and gain, souls to Christ. This part of the subject, probably, had better been deferred, till I came on the head of long-suffering. But I hardly knew how to pass it over in this place: let it be kept in mind.

During those perilous times, where was our Asbury? How was he employed; and what was the manner of his life? After having travelled and preached at large, with all the zeal, fidelity and caution, which prudence and wisdom, situated and circumstanced as he was, could dictate; he being greatly embarrassed and perplexed, and with all, much suspected as an Englishman, had, at length, to retire, in a great measure, for a season, until the indignation was overpast. The spirit of the times, the passions and the prejudices of the people, and the jealousies and suspicions subsisting against him, as an Englishman, and as a principal Methodist preacher, was such, that he could not, with safety, continue to travel openly and at large. In the year 1778, when the storm was at its highest, and persecution raged furiously, he, being in serious danger, prudently and advisedly confined himself, for personal safety, chiefly to the little State of Delaware; where the laws were rather more favorable,

and the rulers and influential men were some what more friendly. For a time he had, even there, to keep himself much retired. He found an asylum, as his castle of safety, in the house, and with the hospitable family, of his fast and firm friend, *Thomas White*, esq. one of the Judges of the Court, in Kent county, Delaware. He was a pious man, and his wife one of the holiest of women; they were great friends to the cause of religion, and to the preachers generally. From this place of retreat and protection, as in a castle of repose and safety, he could correspond with his suffering brethren, who were scattered abroad, in different parts. He could also, occasionally travel about, visiting the societies, and, sometimes, preaching to the people. He was accessible, to all the preachers, and his friends, who came to see him; so that by means of correspondence, and of visits, they could communicate with each other, for mutual counsel, comfort, and encouragement. In some of their movements, they had to be very cautious and circumspect; for they were watched, as the hawk watches the partridge on the mountain; and as the wolves watch the sheep of the pasture and the lambs of the flock. It was about this time, that Shadford and he, had their affecting and final parting, before mentioned. However, *his manner of*

life, was such, as to secure him many influential and fast friends. Among whom, were some of the most respectable characters in the State. And, eventually, he gained the good will, esteem, and confidence, of the public generally, and of the principal officers, and chief rulers of the State. Among those, whose particular friendship he secured, we might mention, with *Judge White*, the pious *Judge Barrett*; both of whom, opened their houses for the brethren as a home, and protected the preachers, and exerted their influence in support of the cause of religion. Each of them was instrumental, in having a preaching-house built, in their respective neighbourhoods; and which, to this day, are respectively called *White's-meeting-house*, and *Barrett's-chapel*.

We may also mention the late *Richard Bassett*, esq. well known, as a distinguished character, not only in that State, but in the United States.—At different times and periods he filled high and honorable stations. He was a Lawyer, of note, a Legislator, a Judge, and a Governor, in the State of Delaware. He was also, a member of the Convention which framed the constitution of the United States, a Senator in the first Congress, and a Judge of the United States' Court, for the circuit, comprising the Districts of Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, and

Delaware. Their friendship, and confidential intercourse, was mutual, intimate, and uninterrupted, till death; the one, only surviving the other, a few months. Bassett died the 16th of August, last, 1815, whose funeral sermon, together with that of his son-in-law, the late James A. Bayard, esq. who died the same month, I preached, by the request of the family, at the same time and place. Asbury died the 31st of March, last, 1816, whose funeral discourse, I am now delivering.—I mention those names, and many others might be mentioned, if time would permit, as a tribute of respect due to their memory, in order to give an idea, how the Lord providentially, favoured Asbury, and his brethren, in raising friends, to open the way before them, that the word of the Lord might go forth as a lamp that burneth.

Their friendship, and patronage, not only extended to him, but to his suffering brethren generally, to the persecuted societies, and to the weeping cause of religion. Under whose fostering protection, and benevolent favor, bleeding Zion smiled in the midst of tears. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

They found Asbury to be, a plain, respectable, and intelligent man; a safe, and a good citizen; a circumspect, and a pious

christion; a zealous, and a faithful minister of the gospel; and worthy of esteem and confidence, as a friend to the country of his choice, of which, he had voluntarily, and providentially, become a citizen. They also found him associated with others, who were plain, honest, upright men, engaged in the laudible work of preaching the gospel, inculcating religion, reforming, and improving, the morals, habits, and manners of the people. And what true patriot, who feared God, loved his country, and had a regard to the good of the people, could refuse to patronise such men, thus employed, in the best of causes? Provided, they only had a knowledge of them, and did but understand, their motives, their business, and their usefulness? And who, pretending to any kind of goodness, would not approve and encourage such philanthropic designs, and such pious, laborious exertions, to revive, and spread, pure and undefiled religion through the land?

The then Governor of Delaware, though, I believe, no professor of religion, being influenced by those considerations, and sundry other motives of good will and friendship, toward Asbury, his brethren, and friends, interposed his kind offices, as Governor, and wrote to the Executive, or Governor of Maryland, in behalf of some

f the suffering preachers in that State—
nd, in consequence of which, they were re-
eased from recognisances, or from prison.
Brother Garrettson, who then was, in the
nidst of all the times of distress, and now
resent, must remember, what passed, be-
ween himself, the Governor, and Doctor
Megaw, on one of those occasions.—For
e, was one, in whose favour an application
as made by the Governor of Delaware to
he Governor of Maryland; and by virtue of
hich, he was released, from his recogni-
ance, in the case of his imprisonment, and
onds in Dorchester.

Under all those embarrassing and per-
lexing circumstances, and trying cases of
uthorised and unauthorised persecutions,
he preachers, with Asbury at their head,
s their Senior, and leader, went on, public-
y, and privately, in their indefatigable la-
ours, with zealous diligence and patient
erseverance. They counted all things, but
oss, and their lives not dear to themselves,
o that they might gain Christ, win souls,
nd finish the ministry and work committed
nto them. The Lord was with them, as
hey passed through the fires and the waters;
e supported their minds, and gave comfort
o their souls, in all their perils and distres-
es; he gave them grace sufficient for the
evil days; and they won and gained souls for

their hire. They saw the pleasure of the Lord prosper in their hands—many were awakened and converted to God. This, in the midst of their sorrows and tears, gave joy and gladness to their own souls. The wilderness and the solitary places were glad, the parched ground became springs of water, and the desert flourished and blossomed as the rose. The eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, the lame leaped as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sang aloud with joy. O, brethren! with what gratitude and thanksgiving, ought we to bear in mind, the toils, the diligence, the zeal, the perseverance, and the patience of our first preachers! What did they suffer, what did they endure, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to make straight paths for our feet, smooth roads, and easy ways, for those who came after them! You who were not cotemporaries with them, and now are enjoying the fruits, advantages, and benefits, of their labours and long-sufferings, can scarcely conceive of their extraordinary trials, and severe warfare; nor of the vast difference between your situation and theirs. Their rough ways, have become smooth to us; their hard ways, are now made easy to us; and the crooked paths, they had to walk, have now become straight and plain for our feet. But, alas! Have we now among us, that

faith, zeal, love, humility, brotherly kindness, union of spirit, deadness to the world, and holy living, which, so much abounded among them? Indeed brethren, I awfully fear!—I lived then, as a spectator, an observer, and a witness; I live now, and stand as a witness yet, and probably, am able to bear testimony.

This reflection, moves my tender feelings, excites an association of ideas, and produces a train of contemplations, that awaken the mind, to a lively recollection, of interesting and affecting occurrences, which are past and gone, in the current of time; and have fled away, like the morning of our youthful days, no more to return forever! The remembrance of which, fills and overflows the sympathetic sensibility of the heart, with inexpressible emotions; all the tender passions and affections of the soul are strangely excited; my conflicting sensations, I cannot well describe!—We can feel, when we cannot speak!—we can feel, what we cannot utter!—we can know, what we cannot relate!—what shall I say? what do I mean?—Brethren, do you understand, do you know any thing of the paradox, of a heart rending satisfaction, of a joyful grief, a mournful comfort, a sorrowful gladness, a painful happiness, and a pensive melancholy pleasure? If so, you may understand

me, and enter into a view of my present feelings. "Our fathers! where are they?—And the prophets! do they live forever?"—Elisha, said to Elijah, as he went up and left him, "my father! my father! and he saw him no more!"—Our Asbury, our fathers, our brethren, who lived before us, who laboured and suffered for us, who brought us up like children, who gave and left us excellent examples, and with whom we have spent so many delightful seasons, in public and in private meetings, and in social interviews—they have left us behind, they have departed in the Lord, we shall see them on earth no more! We ought to record their names, perpetuate their memory, and spread their fame abroad; for they were the excellent of the earth. They will not return to us, but we shall follow them. O, may we follow them in their excellent examples, through the regeneration here below, and follow them to heaven! Well may our hearts be full, our eyes be bathed in tears, and every sympathetic passion flow, like fountains of waters, in streams and currents, of intermixed joy and grief!—Surely, we shall be allowed to vent our sighs, and weep!—It needs no apology. When Lazarus died, and his sisters, and friends, were mourning, *Jesus wept—Behold, how he loved him!*

But to return to the historical and biographical narrative. The more Asbury and the preachers were known, the more they gained friends—the more the people became acquainted with their doctrines, their manser of life, their purposes, and their designs, the more they approved, and the better they liked them. Their friends increased, in the midst of their enemies.

In 1777, it was asked in conference, "As the *present distress is such*, are the preachers resolved to take no step to detach themselves from the work of God for the ensuing year?" To which it was answered,—"We purpose, by the grace of God, not to take any step that may separate us from the brethren, or from the blessed work in which we are engaged." I believe, that none of the English preachers continued in the country, longer than 1778, excepting *Asbury;* they fled from the troubles and distresses, and from the work; leaving, as it were, the sheep in the wilderness, among the wolves. Not so with *Francis*, he stood at his post, as a good shepherd, venturing himself and his all, for the sake of the flock. But the times and circumstances were such, that his name, I believe, does not appear in the Minutes of Conference for that year. It was a blessed thing, for the cause of religion, that he stood firm, and continued among us.

Surely it was of the Lord. Among other troubles and difficulties, without, the brethren had some painful trials among themselves. About that time, a partial division took place in the connexion, on account of the administration of the ordinances. In Virginia, a part of the brethren, associated, and, for the sake of the ordinances, resolved on a separation from the old church of England; and they introduced ordination, and the sacraments, among themselves, as an independant, separate people. They proceeded so far, as to occasion a partial division, among themselves, for a season. This step, was disapproved of, and opposed, by Asbury, and others; as irregular, unadvisable, and premature. In 1779, there were two conferences held; the first was in the State of Delaware, in April, for the convenience of the preachers in the northern stations, that all might have an opportunity of meeting in conference; for, at that time, it was not advisable for Asbury, Ruff, and some others, to attend in Virginia. It was also preparatory to the other conference, which was to be held in Virginia, in the month of May; and to guard against the separation, which at that time was taking place. The sentiments of Asbury, and of the Delaware conference, were to be taken to the Virginia conference, by Wm. Watters. A brief

statement of which, may be seen in the Minutes for that year. That conference, renewed the appointment of Mr. Asbury, as the Superintendent, or General assistant, then so called. He was the senior preacher among them, and had been originally appointed, by Mr. Wesley, to that office; but now, they renewed, and confirmed, his appointment.

In April, 1780, a Conference was held in Baltimore; which, unanimously, disapproved of the steps taken by the brethren in Virginia; and resolved not to look upon them any longer as Methodists, in connexion with Mr. Wesley and themselves, until they came back into the union.—Requiring, as a condition, the suspension of their ordinations, and sacramental administrations, and all to meet together at the next Conference, in Baltimore. Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters, were appointed to attend the Virginia Conference, in order to inform them of the proceedings of the Conference in Baltimore; and to use their influence, to prevent a further division; and also to receive their answer. This mission, or duty, was performed successfully. Times were then growing better, or more moderate; Asbury, and others, then could travel at large, in Maryland, Virginia, and other places, without much interruption.

In April, 1781, the Conference was held in Baltimore. After mature consideration, close observation, and earnest prayer, they resolved, firmly, to discountenance a separation among either the preachers, or the people. The brethren, in Virginia, yielded to the decision.

Thus ended the partial division, chiefly through the counsel, and influence, of Asbury; peace, among brethren, was restored, and union established, both among the preachers and the people. It did not, however, appear to be a division of heart and affection; but only of opinion about the ordinances, and of the measures to be pursued. —Love however prevailed. It was agreed upon, by mutual consent, to consult Mr. Wesley, and to follow his advice and counsel, upon the question of becoming an independent church, separate from the church of England.

In 1782, by virtue of the Preliminary Articles of peace, hostilities ceased between the United States and Great Britain—and in 1783, the Definitive Treaty of peace was signed, ratified, and carried into full effect. The Independence of the United States, being acknowledged, by Great Britain, and our civil and religious rights, liberties, and privileges, being established, and secured, and peace being restored again to the land; the state of things was amazingly changed.

In 1784, Mr. Wesley, who had been applied to for advice and counsel, considered the situation of the Methodist societies in the United States; and on mature deliberation, and calm reflection, advised, and recommended, his American brethren, who were totally disentangled, both from the British civil government, and from the English church hierarchy, that it was best for them, "to stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God had so strangely made them free." —And, he and us, being at full liberty, in this matter, to follow the scriptures, and the usages of the primitive church; he being clear in his own mind, took a step, which he had long weighed in his thoughts; and, not only advised and recommended his American brethren, but took a decided part in aiding them, to become a distinct and independent church. Accordingly, he set apart, and appointed, *Thomas Coke*, Doctor of Civil law, late of Jesus College, Oxford, who was a regular Presbyter of the English church, and vested him with full Episcopal authority, to come over to America on this business; and Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vesey, presbyters, to come with him; and to confer ordinations, and to assist the Methodist societies, in becoming, and organizing themselves, an independent church. At the same time, he recommended the Epis-

copal form and mode of church government; and that Dr. *Thomas Coke*, and Mr. *Francis Asbury*, be received, and acknowledged, as joint Superintendants, or bishops. The same year, Mr. Wesley executed the famous deed of settlement, or declaration, of one hundred preachers, of whom Dr. Coke was one, and first on the list, after the two Wesleys, as members of the British Conference, in regular succession, to be known in law, and to hold the chapels, preaching-houses, and other property, in behalf of the connexion in Europe. Next to his brother *Charles*, no man stood higher, in the esteem and confidence of Mr. *Wesley*, than Dr. *Coke*; and in America, no man stood so high with him as Mr. *Asbury*.

September 18th, 1784, *Coke*, *Whatcoat*, and *Vesey*, sailed from Bristol, for America; and landed in New York, the 3d of November, following. Dr. Coke, and Whatcoat, leaving Vesey behind, hastened on to the south, with all expedition. On the 14th of the same month, November, they met Mr. Asbury, and about fifteen of the American preachers, at a Quarterly Meeting, held in Barrett's Chapel, Kent county, State of Delaware. I was then a witness, with my eyes, my ears, and my heart, of one of the most solemn, interesting, and affectionate meetings. It was in full view of a large con-

course of people, a crowded congregation, assembled for public worship. While Dr. Coke was preachng, Mr. Asbury came into the congregation. A solemn pause, and deep silence, took place at the close of the sermon, as an interval for introduction, and salutation. Asbury and Coke, with great solemnity, and much dignified sensibility, and with full hearts of brotherly love, approached, embraced, and saluted each other. The other preachers, at the same time, participating in the tender sensibilities of the affectionate salutations, were melted into sweet sympathy and tears. The congregation, also, caught the glowing emotion, and the whole assembly, as if divinely struck, with a shock of heavenly electricity, burst into a flood of tears.—Every heart, appeared as if filled, and overflowing, with love, unity, and fellowship; and a kind of ecstacy, or rapture, of joy and gladness ensued. I can never forget the affecting scene.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered by the Doctor and Mr. Whatcoat, to several hundreds, and it was a blessed season, to many souls, while in the holy ordinance, they, through faith, discerned the Lord's Body, and shewed forth his death, and were feasting on him in their souls, by faith, with thanksgiving. It is the more impressive on my mind, and affecting to my

recollection; for, at that meeting, was th
first time I ever partook of the Lord's sup
per, and the first time, that, *that* ordinance
was ever administered among the Metho
dists, in this country, by their own regularly
ordained preachers. And also, it was there
by the particular request, and special injunc
tion, of brother Asbury, and the advice and
counsel of some other preachers, that I was
prevailed on to set out as an itinerant preach
er; although, at that time, I had never pub
licly preached a sermon. I had made no
application to travel, nor, at that time, even
contemplated it. It was unsought, and when
I went to that meeting, perfectly unexpect
ed. With much diffidence, and great reluct
ance, I yielded to go; though pressed to it,
by my greatly beloved, and much esteemed
brother Asbury, and encouraged, and urged
to it, by some of the other preachers. Old
brother W. Thomas, held up both his hands
toward me, and in a loving and alarming
manner, addressed me, "I warn you, in the
name of God, not to refuse! I do not know,
but your salvation depends upon it! God
has a work for you to do, and, he has called
you to it; and wo, be unto you, if you preach
not the gospel!"—That address, thrilled
through me like thunder; my heart filled,
I could say no more! They had some know
ledge of my deep exercises, about preach

g, and they believed that I was "verily
lled to the work." They having heard me
conversation, and, in the close of meet-
gs, a few times, exhort and pray, they
pposed I had "a talent to be improved."
owever, I submitted; and, *having obtained*
lp of God, I continue to this day, witnessing
h to small and great, that they should re-
nt and turn to God. The Lord have mercy
on me! my only hope for acceptance and
vation, is in the mercy of God, through
sus Christ my Redeemer! From that time,
ore especially, I have had a particular and
imate knowledge of *Francis Asbury*, and
e *manner of his life.* We have had a confi-
ntial intercourse, an intimate friendship,
d union of heart. And it now gives me
nsolation, to recollect, that the last time
e met and parted, it was in brotherly love,
the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of
ace. His acquaintance, and his friendship,
s long been a particular source of pleasure
d happiness to my mind. I can scarcely
ntain myself under the affecting recollec-
ns which crowd upon my mind. Being
ch moved, I am almost ready to cry out, in
e spirit of lamentation, like David, when
went up to the chamber and wept for Ab-
om—O, my father Asbury! Would God
ad died for thee, O Asbury, my father!
father! But it is all over! The strongest,
arest ties in life, must be broken!

It was at that meeting, at Barrett's chape of which I have spoken, that by mutual con sent and agreement, of the preachers there that the General conference was called, t meet in Baltimore, on the Christmas follow ing, to take into consideration, the proposal and advice of Mr. Wesley. Intelligenc was sent off, to every part of the con nexion. Brother Garrettson, was appointe to go through Maryland, into Virginia, an to give the information, to the south an west, and to call the preachers together.

The conference met, the 27th, of Decem ber, 1784, and continued their deliberation and sitting until sometime in Jan. 1785.— It was unanimously agreed, that circumstan ces made it expedient for the Methodist so cieties, in America, to become a separat body, from the church of England, of which until then, they had been considered a members. They also resolved to take th title, and to be known in future, by the nam of THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH —They made the episcopal office elective and the bishops, or superintendants, to b amenable, for their conduct, to the body o preachers, or to the General conference.— Mr. *Asbury*, though appointed by Mr. *Wes ley*, would not be ordained, unless he wa chosen by a vote, or the voice of the confe rence. He was unanimously elected, an

Dr. Coke, was also unanimously received, jointly with him, to be the *Superintendants*, or *Bishops*, of the *Methodist Episcopal church*. From that time, the methodist societies, in the United States, became an independant church, under the Episcopal mode and form of government—Designing, professing, and resolving "to follow the scriptures, and the primitive church," according to the advice and counsel of Mr. Wesley, and in perfect unison with the views, the opinion, and wishes of Mr. Asbury. This step met with general approbation, both among the preachers and the members. Perhaps we shall seldom find, such unanimity of sentiment, in a whole community, upon any question, of such magnitude, proposed to be adopted by them. And do we profess, in our church government, and order, to be founded on, to be governed by, and to follow, the Scriptures, and also the usages of the primitive church? Well brethren, let us be careful, firmly to adhere to the good old way; and never depart from the Scripture rule! Let us continue to follow the best lights we can obtain, from the apostolick and primitive usages and customs, both as to doctrines, morality, discipline, and church government.

From the time that the church was constituted, and he was clothed with Episcopal

functions, until the day of his death, which was more than thirty years, Bishop Asbury continued to be, uninterruptedly, the approved, the diligent, the indefatigable, and useful Superintendant of the Methodist Episcopal church, in the United States and the extensive territories thereof. He made it his constant, regular, and only business. Once a year, he, generally, passed through the widely extended bounds of his vast and important charge. He usually travelled about five thousand miles, annually; and in his tour, generally presided in six, seven, or eight conferences; fixed the stations and appointments, of, from two to six hundred preachers; ordained a great number of travelling and local elders and deacons; and, likewise, had the general oversight of the whole connexion, and body of the church, amounting, at the close of his labours, to more than two hundred thousand members. —Beside all this, there were other ministerial cares and arduous labours—such as, public preaching; an extensive epistolary correspondence, business of divers kinds, with the trustees, of different churches, or societies, and the various other official members; and in overseeing, less or more, the temporalities, and spiritualities of the whole church. To which may be added, his remarkable attention to, and constant diligence

in social and family prayer, and religious conversations, admonitions, and counsels, wherever he went, and into whatsoever place or circle he came; together, with his attention to reading, to study, and to private and secret devotions, in promoting, and establishing, and maintaining, his own communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, and to keep his own soul alive to God. Wonderful man! Every day, and every hour, almost every minute, appeared to be employed, and devoted, in close application to some excellent work and useful purpose! But he appeared to have nothing to do with the things of this world, only as they promoted the cause of God.

It might be too prolix, and tedious, in this discourse, to follow him minutely through all the complicated and diversified movements, and exercises, of his public and private life, from week to week, from month to month, and from year to year; in the great work of his own salvation, the salvation of others, and the good of the world. His *manner of life*, has been equalled by few; perhaps surpassed by none. I am confidently persuaded, to take him all and in all, that no man, in America, ever came up to his standard. I have many things in my knowledge, and recollection, to say, which crowd upon my mind. I have known him well, and

I have known him long; and have a recollection and knowledge of so many events and circumstances in his life, and so many traits, in his excellent character, to form his biographical portraiture; that, were I to indulge, in the leadings of my present feelings of respectful considerations, perhaps, I might exceed the limits, prescribed by prudent discretion, for the bounds of a funeral discourse. Hence, I can only give you some slight descriptive touches, and brief sketches, of his remarkable and extraordinary life.

In his annual visitations, and extensive tours, he was somewhat like the revolving seasons of the year, regularly, and periodically, constantly, and beneficially, coming and going, and returning again. Or, like the sun, in his daily and annual circuit; continually keeping his course, progressing through the hemispheres, and the degrees of latitude, in the different seasons of the year; diffusing light, and heat, and benefits, to the world. I trust the similitude will not be considered as chimerical, or merely fanciful; for the scripture justifies the comparison in some degree—"*Ye shine as lights in the world—Ye are the lights of the world—The path of the just, is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"—And the stars, which the Lord held in his right hand, were the angels, or the bishops, of the churches.

We find him like a herald of the Lord, passing through the different parts, and almost in every part of the nation.—At one time we see him in the State of Maryland, then, he goes through Delaware, Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, New-York, Connecticut, Rhode-Island, Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, the Province of Main, Vermont, and away beyond the lines, and the Lakes, into Canada. *The King's business requiring haste.*—We see him quickly returning, through other parts of York, and Pennsylvania; and away he goes to the west, through Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Western Territories. Then away through Georgia, South-Carolina, North-Carolina, and Virginia, and back again he comes to Maryland. And all this extensive tour in the space of one year. And that, repeated, again, and again, from year to year. It is scarcely necessary to mention, what must be so obvious, that in performing such astonishing annual tours; and in attending to all the vast variety of his christian, ministerial, and episcopal duties and callings; he must have been almost continually on the move; and be diligently, as well as constantly employed. Flying, as it were, like the angel, through the earth, preaching the everlasting gospel. No season, no weather, stopped him. Through winter's cold, and summer's heat, he press-

ed on. He was often in the tempest and the storm ; in rain, snow, and hail ; in hunger, thirst, weariness, and afflictions. Sometimes uncomfortable entertainment, with hard lodging and unkind treatment.

Methinks, in a contemplative view, I see him, bending his missionary course, from the large cities, and populous towns, through the thick settled countries, until I behold him far away and over the hills. Climbing the lofty Blue ridges, and the towering Alleghany Mountains, whose elevated summets, rise among the clouds. " I soar, said he, but it is over the tops of the highest mountains." Then to the distant and remote settlements, in and beyond the dreary wilderness! Traversing the solitary and gloomy valleys; crossing and re-crossing the dangerous northern and western waters, which in rapid currents flow! I can almost see him on the desolate banks of the Lakes, and the rivers St. Lawrence, the Ohio, the Mississippi, and others, passing from shore to shore.— There he resorted, and there he was found, administering the word of life, in lonely cottages, to the poor and destitute inhabitants. Sometimes, he had to sleep upon the floor, or on beds of straw, or not much better, in houses built of logs, filled in with clay, and covered over with bark of trees or wooden slabs. Sometimes, like Jacob of

old, he had to take up his lodging in the wild wilderness, and open air; with the earth for his bed, and the sky for the canopy; surrounded by the ravenous beasts of the forest, roaming and prowling for their prey; and by the fierce savages, of the desert, wandering and searching for their victims and game. He knew how to abound, among the wealthy, in populous cities, and rich countries; and how to endure hardship and want, among the indigent poor, in the barren mountains, the uncultivated wilderness, and other places of poverty. This was his *manner of life*, to spend and be spent, in going about, from place to place, like his Master, and the disciples of old, in doing good. Most excellent man; who can but admire him with reverence?

At times, we find him in oppulent families, abounding with plenty, supplied with all the comforts, which wealth, friendship, and hospitable kindness could afford; at other times, among those in the mediocrity of life, enjoying a competency, barely sufficient to supply the common necessaries of life; at other times, among the indigent sufferers, straitened and pinched in their circumstances, and destitute of the means to make life comfortable; not only those who were sighing under the griping hand of poverty, but also those, who were groaning under the

hard and cruel hand of oppression and injustice; and bowed down, under the weight of complicated distresses, and afflictions.—*The poor had the gospel preached to them.* He cheerfully and willingly, *condescended to men of low estate.* Even the poor African race, in bondage and wretchedness, were not neglected by him; he attended to their forlorn condition, and taught them the way of life, of gospel liberty, and salvation. Here, in *this manner of life*, were found occasions for the exercise of *long-suffering*, *faith*, *charity*, *patience*, and full employment for all the graces of the Spirit, and for sympathetic benevolence.

When among the great, the honorable, and the rich, he manifested humility, in his prosperity; maintaining, at the same time, a dignified independence of spirit, without exaltation. When among the poor, and lower classes of society, he shewed a courteous condescension, and manifested content, and patience, in adversity. He went on through good report, and through evil report, among the rich, the poor, the wise, and the unwise; without partiality and without respect of persons. At all times, among all people, in all places, and upon all occasions, his aim was, to promote the cause of God; to be instrumental to the good of man, and to the salvation of precious souls.

His eye, appeared to be always single, and his whole body, soul, and example, full of light. He was one of the lights of the world; his light did shine bright before men, and they saw his good works. He was, a great, a burning, and a shining light.

Perhaps, it may not be necessary to speak of his literary attainments; though, probably, some will expect it. It is understood, and admitted, that he was not distinguished as a scientific, or literary Scholar. He was not considered a critical Linguist; nor as being eminent in the arts and sciences. He made but little pretention to either; and never sought to rank with the *Literati*.—Though languages, arts and sciences, ought to be encouraged, and, no doubt have their various excellent uses; yet, nevertheless, they are not the essential, nor pre-eminent qualifications, of an apostolic, primitive, or modern, christian minister, or bishop. The scriptures are clear and full on this point.—The apostles were not learned men. We are also informed, that many of the primitive fathers, were not learned men. Even the great, and celebrated *Augustine*, Bishop of *Hippo*, did not understand *Greek;* and, his cotemporary, *John*, Bishop of *Jerusalem*, did not understand *Latin*. Those two noted and eminent bishops, in their intercourse and correspondence, had to have

an interpreter; of course, there was no one language, which they both understood; either Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. Other cases might be recited, in different ages and nations, to shew, that much learning, was not considered as an essential qualification, to be a minister of the gospel, or a bishop. Although we admit, that our late Bishop, did not pretend to much literature, and that he did not stand high in the ranks of the *Literatie;* yet, he had some knowledge of the learned languages, and was able to read and consult the Holy Scriptures in their originals. He was conversant with, and delighted in, his Hebrew Bible, which he almost continually carried with him.

In the early part of his life and ministry, more especially, he gave himself diligently to study, and to reading; and had acquired a considerable stock of useful information and knowledge. He had an acquaintance with the necessary branches of polite literature; of natural and moral philosophy; ancient and modern history, both profane, civil, and ecclesiastical; also of Geography, Biography, Logic, Rhetoric, &c. He had an extensive knowledge of the world, of men, and of the nature of things. But he shewed no disposition to make a display of his knowledge, his talents, or his learning. He never, with solicitude or ambition, sought after fame, distinction, or popularity, among the men of

this world. His greatest ambition was, to be useful, and his greatest solicitude was, to save souls. *To shew himself approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* He studied, he meditated, on these things; he gave himself wholly to them. He *took heed unto himself;* and also, unto *his doctrines;* he *continued in them*, that, *in so doing, he might both save himself and them that heard him.* Of all his studies, there was one, especially, which was always dear to him, which he never neglected, and in which he was continually delighted, and never ceased to make an improvement in, unto the latest period of his life. It was, *the study* of the *Bible*, the *Religion of the Bible*, christian and ministerial duty and usefulness. In this christian science, this evangelical philosophy, he made a very extraordinary proficiency, and was equaled by few, perhaps surpassed by none.—Let us all, deligently study, this CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

His manner, of preaching, was well known. His language was good, his manner agreeable, his matter excellent, and his voice melodious. "But, (copying after the apostle) his eloquence did not usually consist in the splendor of pompous language; nor the artificial flowers of refined and polite oratory; but in the grandeur of the sentiments,

and the sublimity and excellence of the divine truths he uttered. His addresses were, generally, plain and simple; yet energetic, carrying with them the impressive authority of truth; and admirably tempered with the gentleness of christianity, self-possession, modest intrepidity, and humble boldness; and, most commonly, consisted in a judicious selection of choice matter, to suit the occasion. It was neither his study, nor custom, to use artful strains of disingenuous, or unintelligible declamation, to amuse and tickle the fanciful imaginations of those who had itching ears. It was not his object to shew, by smooth and well turned periods, and all the studied artificial graces of rhetorick, how handsomely he could speak; nor did he seek, in all the beautiful elegance of attitude and elocution, to gain the admiration of the listening multitude; but rather to manifest, how well, how truly, how convincingly, and how feelingly and pungently he could address himself, *to every man's conscience in the sight of God;* that, thereby, he might gain souls for Christ. Every thing, bombastic, in the pulpit, all artificial rhapsody and affectation, all pompous display of theatrical oratory and eloquence, he utterly discarded. He was careful, *not to preach himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord: and himself the servant of all, for the sake of Christ.*

He was, however, sometimes, rather abrupt and obscure, owing to the suddenness of his transitions and digressions; and his method, frequently bore the appearance of the want of attention, and correct arrangement; this was discoverable, or rather apparent, in his epistolary correspondence, and conversations, as well as in his extemporary public preaching; but this supposed neglect, and apparent irregularity, or defect, was, sometimes, made more impressive, and more touching, than the most lucid and critical order, or the most ingenious and methodical arrangement. It was not his custom, nor design, politely to compliment christianity, by bestowing on it flattering eulogies, splendid panegyricks, and fanciful flowers, and ornaments of rhetorical eloquence. But rather, to pay it a profound homage and reverence, and to recommend it to others, and to enforce it, in all its own intrinsic excellencies, its divine beauties, native simplicity, and great plainness. May we not further say, in the language of an eminent writer, that, he was too devout to be ingenious, too earnest to be fanciful, too humble to be inventive? That his sober mind, could discern no real analogy, between the sublime truths of christianity, and the little arts of refined human accomplishments? Did he ever sooth, where it was a duty to give re-

proof? Did he not consider that a harsh truth, which tended to benefit a soul, had more benevolence in it, than a dangerous pleasing palliative? He was not guilty of that mischievous compassion, and solicitude, of preferring the ease and applause, of his friends and the people, to their safety and benefit. He was studious to awaken every guilty conscience to a sincere contrition; but he was just as ready, and earnest, to heal the pangs of a wounded spirit, by an application of the *Balm of Gilead*, and to administer the cordials of consolation, and the *oil of joy* to those who had received *the spirit of mourning*. Dignity, simplicity, independence, and godly sincerity, accompanied by a ministerial, evangelical authority, were admirably united in his manner of preaching. He was very little elevated by applause, or depressed by reproach; but, with Paul, could exclaim, as with a noble disregard to personal considerations, *None of those things move me; neither count I my life dear, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God!*

His manner, of ruling and governing the church, *we have fully known*. Perhaps, we might, with propriety, say of him, what Livy said of Cato, "You would suppose, that he was born for the very place and thing, in

which he was employed and engaged." We might point you to his manner of presiding, in the annual and general conferences; his method of precision, and decision, in stationing and fixing the appointments of the preachers; his solemnity, and manner, in ordaining deacons, elders, and bishops; and, probably, he ordained more ministers of the gospel, than any other man living. The field of his administration was large. His work was great and complicated; the trusts committed to his care, were numerous and important; the power and authority, given to him, and vested in him, as bishop, in the executive government of the church, put him in a critical responsibility to God, to the church, and to all his brethren. We might notice a thousand transactions, in his manner of ruling the church, and governing his charge; which would be interesting, entertaining, and instructive, in the particular and general, public and private, execution of discipline, and in the exercise of his episcopal functions, and authority; but for these I must refer you to the biographical historian of his life; who, I trust, will do ample justice to his character and memory.

It has, however, been objected by some, "that he had too much power; that more authority was vested in him, than was consistant with the safety and security, of the

rights and privileges, of the ministry, and of the membership, of the church of Christ; that, had he been so disposed, with the authority and power he possessed, he could have oppressed his brethren, driven them from the work, or, have imposed on them burdens and hardships, incompatible with the genuine principles of christian liberty, and the rights of man." It has also been objected, "That he was too fond of power, and too tenacious of maintaining his authority, and of supporting his power." As to those objections, this is neither the time nor the place, to repel, rebut, defend, or controvert them. However, it may be proper, in this part of the subject, to bring them into view; and, by way of accommodation, I have no difficulty in admitting, honestly and candidly, that the objections, when considered on general principles, are too well founded.

But, is there not an apology, sufficient to extenuate the supposed fault contained in the objections? Perhaps, no other man, could be equally justifiable, in wishing, or claiming, or exercising, the same degree of authority in the church; and, probably, the conferences will not consider themselves justifiable in admitting, or granting, the same power to any other. Bishop Asbury, stood as a father, and as a patriarch, in the connexion. The preachers, and the members,

were nurtured, and brought up under him, like children by a parent; they were in the habit of being directed by him, and of looking up to him, with filial affection, and peculiar reverence, and of rendering a respectful submission to him. As sons, and children, in the gospel, they felt their obligations to him, as to a father. They had also experienced his parental care over them, and proved his fatherly solicitude for their prosperity and welfare. He was, to the American connexion, like the patriarch Jacob, to the tribes of Israel. The venerable Wesley, was, as the Abraham, the father of the Methodist community; and Asbury, as the Jacob, to the American Methodists.

No other man, can ever possibly stand in the same relation to us. To us, he was like a Moses, who led us out of Egypt, through the wilderness, toward the promised land. And from him, the servant of God, we received, as it were, the tables of the law. So we were in the habit, and practice, of being led, directed, and instructed by him. It cannot be expected, in the nature of things, that any other, can possibly have the same influence and authority. A brother, cannot reasonably, have the same influence and authority over brethren, that a father had over his sons. Perhaps, under the circumstances of the case, no man, could, in any situation,

be more justifiable, in claiming and exercising, his influence and authority, over a religious community; unless we except the venerable Wesley. And, probably, no community, could be more justifiable in yielding, with cheerful submission, than in the case under consideration; unless we except the English connexion, to Mr. Wesley. I suggest these considerations, not by way of opposition or vindication; but, by way, of amicably stating the case, to your considerations, and as an extenuation, of the supposed fault, in the estimation of the objectors; who would appear to attach blame, both to our late Bishop, for claiming, and to the Conferences for granting, and submitting to, so much power in one man. Perhaps, he was rather too tenacious, and might have shewn rather too much solicitude on the point in question. If so, no doubt, it was, because he thought it was for the best, and in the order of God; and, was fully persuaded, that it was right, and conducive to the promotion of religion, and the good of the church; as being providentially put into his hand, for that purpose, by divine direction.

But, in what manner did he exercise his power? When, and where, was the man, possessing so much influence, and invested with so much authority, that ever used it to better purposes, for the good of others; and

so little to selfish advantages; so little toward his own bodily ease, earthly honor, or worldly profit? Who ever exercised his authority and influence more disinterestedly, in the spirit and temper of an apostolic and primitive Bishop? As Crowther observes, in his Portraiture of Methodism, "May he not be said, to have (had) the largest see of any bishop in the world? yet, many curates have larger salaries?" His diocess, extended from Canada, and the other British possessions to the North and East, unto the Spanish possessions, the Floridas, and Mexico, to the South and West, fifteen hundred, or two thousand miles in length; and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi and Louisiania, East and West, the best part of one thousand miles in breadth. Including all the United States, and the extensive territories thereof. And he generally went through this whole district, once every year. And, instead of a salary of hundreds, or thousands, which scarcely satisfy the cravings of some ordinary secular priests, common parish ministers, or lucre-loving bishops; he, as a bishop, with all his authority, though in labours more abundant, contented himself with the small allowance, of Eighty Dollars a year, and the amount of his travelling expenses; he demanded, he requested, he asked no more.

He was *Not greedy of filthy lucre, he was blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, apt to teach, not given to wine, not a novice, he had a good report of them who were without; one who ruled well, and knew how to take care of the church of God. For, a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.* Did ever a bishop come nearer to the apostolic standard, since the primitive days? Let every bishop, and every minister, examine himself, and regulate his conduct accordingly, by the rule laid down, in the scriptures, for Timothy, Titus, and others to follow.

What a certain writer said of St. Paul, we may here apply—" He was a conqueror; he had gained the most splendid victories; and still, during his probationary state, he considered himself only in the road to salvation; still he never thought of slackening his course, or diligence; he thought not of resting; he had not reached his end. His resolution rose with his trials and afflictions, he was not intimidated; his grand solicitude was, that himself and others, might not lose the ground they had gained. He never sought, whilst he never shrunk from danger.

His straight forward rectitude, neither courted the applause, nor despised the good opinion of men. As Paley said of Paul, "the coolness of his head kept pace with the warmth of his heart." That prudence which is a-kin to selfishness, that discretion which leans to craft, that candor which tends to undue pliancy, that wisdom which is sensual and earthly, he never sought, and had not acquired. "No desire of pleasing, no fear of offending, prevented him from delivering wholesome truths, because they might be unpalatable. That which Burke said of the Marquis of Rockingham, we may with more propriety say, of Asbury, "His virtues were his arts."

Perhaps no man ever adhered more literally and more punctually to the scripture precepts respecting prayer. *Pray without ceasing, pray always, pray evermore, men ought always to pray, with all manner of prayer, and supplication in the spirit, watching unto prayer &c.* He had maturely considered the nature and subjects of prayer, the obligations, the utility, and the indispensible duty and necessity of prayer, in every state, and situation, of body and mind, and in every condition of life. In danger, prayer was his strong hold for safety; in trouble, prayer was his resource for comfort; in sickness, it was his refuge; in dejection, his

hope; in death, his support and consolation. He was importunate in prayer, incessant in supplications, and unwearied in his addresses, and applications, continually to the throne of grace; making his requests known, in all things to God, by supplication and prayer, with boldness, faith, confidence, and humility. He was truly a man great and wonderful in prayer. His access to the throne of grace was remarkable, his gifts in prayer were astonishing, and he appeared to address himself to God, in his intercessions with *much assurance of faith. Ask and ye shall receive;* the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much with God.—Perhaps, no man ever devoted himself more frequently, more fervently, and more devoutly, to prayer, than he.

Those who have had the pleasure of his acquaintance, the benefit of his visits, and the happiness of entertaining him in their houses, *fully know the manner of his life;* his holy living, his pious deportment, his godly examples, his religious conversations, his devout prayers, and his zealous, earnest, and affectionate, both admonitions, among parents, children, servants, and visitors. The recollection thereof, fills your hearts with joy and gladness, that you ever knew him, and were blessed with his company and friendship, under your roofs, and in your families; but,

ne affecting consideration, that you will ever be favoured with the pleasure and benefit of his company and presence there gain, fills your hearts with overflowing sorow. Ah! my beloved friends, you will see is face no more! Your weeping eyes, your ushing tears, your throbbing hearts, your nutterable sighs and groans, speak more impressively, and more emphatically, than language can describe!

Time would fail me, to be more minute upon all the rules, maxims, customs, forms, nd modes, of his extraordinary *manner of ife;* as a man, a christian, a minister, and superintendant of the church of Christ.—t would lead me too far beyond the ordinary imits of a funeral discourse. I must now pass on, and take a brief view of the closing scene, and the end of his life!

I have had my eye upon him, and kept him in view, and followed him through the vicissitudes, and complicated cares, duties, and labours of life. But now, I have come to a point, and arrived at a place where he disappears: I lose sight of him, and come to a solemn pause! a sudden stop!—I stand and look, with fixed attention, and weeping eyes! We see him no more! I raise my trembling hand, and point toward the sorrowful, the mournful place of lamentation, where his course was finished, and his distinguished journey in life was ended! Shall

I direct your attention, and call your pensive minds, to the mourning house of his old friend, George Arnold, in Spottsylvania, Virginia? There he was; he disappeared; and there we lost him! There, the scene was closed! There, on that spot, he ceased to labour, to suffer, to breathe, and to live! It is finished, it is done, it is ended! He fell a victim to death, and triumphantly yielded his spirit to God! He conquered, though he died! In the midst of splendid victory, he fell into the arms of his adorable Saviour! Shall we repair to the place where we lost him, to the house of lamentation, to the silent grave, and weep with those that weep? Where have they laid him? Surely some Monument will be reared, to designate the spot, where the remains, the bones, and the dust, of the *venerable Asbury*, are deposited!*

His name, and his manner of life, should be recorded on vellum, and engraven in marble; that generations yet unborn, after we shall all be sleeping with him in the grave, may point at the record and say,

* Since the discourse, of which, this contains the substance, was delivered, the official members of the Methodist Episcopal church, in Baltimore, by and with the consent of the General Conference, have had the relicks of the *Bishop*, removed to Baltimore, and deposited, in a respectable situation, at the *Eutaw Church*. This respectful attention, does honor to the memory of Bishop Asbury, and to themselves.

"There is the testimony, in remembrance of the great, the good, the wise, the exemplary, the laborious, and the memorable *Bishop Asbury.*" While he lived, his life, and labours, were bestowed on the public, and on the church; and now he has gone down to the grave, posterity may say, in the language of an eminent statesman, and orator, of ancient days. He has received a praise that will never decay, a sepulchre that will always be most illustrious;—not that in which his bones lie mouldering, but that in which his fame is preserved; to be on every occasion, when the honor, the fidelity, the laborious deligence, of the gospel ministry, is the employ of either words or actions, "Eternally remembered!"—No glory, no renown, is comparable to that of doing good; and of all the various kinds of good, that we can do, that is pre-eminent, which has respect directly to the benefit of the souls, and spiritual state of mankind: Their holiness and happiness in time, and their endless felicity in eternity!

Thou hast fully known, my doctrine, manner of life, and, MY PURPOSE. The *purpose* of man is essentially connected with his *manner of life.* In speaking of one, we must occasionally touch on the other. Our moral virtues, and their contrary vices, generally receive their stamp and type, from the

purpose of the heart. A great proportion of the virtue and vice, the moral good and evil, in life, depend directly, or indirectly, upon the purpose, the design, or the intention of the mind. According to this, we act; and among the various objects of choice, make our selection, with respect to the courses and measures, to be pursued, in order to accomplish the end we have in view. Hence, base purposes, have a tendency to lead to base actions: *the evil man, from the evil treasure, and* purposes, *of his heart, bringeth forth evil things.* On the other hand, correct and upright purposes, lead to correct and upright actions: *the good man, from the good treasure,* and purposes, *of his heart, bringeth forth good things.*

The word *purpose*, signifies the resolution of the soul to do a thing, the intention of the mind with respect to any thing, the design and motive of the heart in our actions, and the end or object we have in view to be accomplished by our actions and pursuits in life. Now, what was the resolution, the intention, the design, the motive, the object, the end, or the PURPOSE, of the venerable Bishop Asbury? Examine his whole deportment, and conduct; his actions, his pursuits, his doings, his objects and his ends in view, to be accomplished; and what do they speak? Retrospect and investigate his

public and private life; look into all his movements and transactions, with men and things, in the world, and in the church; view the bearing, the relation, the connexion, the tendency, of all his pursuits and measures; his privations, self-denial, mortifications, long sufferings, and arduous toils and labours; and who can hesitate a moment, to say, that his PURPOSES, must have been noble, benevolent, pure, and holy?

We have had the most indubitable evidences, of the honest sincerity, and strict integrity of his soul, and the purity and uprightness of his designs, intentions, and motives. He always appeared to aim at the greatest good, and the best end, and at the best means to accomplish the object; following the last and best dictate of his understanding, according to the clearest light, the best evidence, and the most correct information he could obtain. On this principle and basis, his *pure purpose* stood, and from it he was not to be moved. He was *steadfast, immoveable, and always abounding, in the work of the Lord.* No cross, no danger, no suffering, no labour, or toil, would hinder, or turn him aside, where, he conscienciously believed that duty called him. Neither honor nor reproach, riches nor poverty, friends nor enemies, ease nor pain could influence or deter him from his straight for-

ward course. Inflexible integrity, and honest sincerity, appeared to be incorporated with all his purposes, plans, arrangements, and pursuits. It must however be admitted, that in him there sometimes appeared a flexibility of *manner;* a change of opinion and measures; but, while this manifested an openness of mind to conviction, upon receiving new light, further and better information, or from the evidence of experience; it proved that he was not perverse, stubborn, or obstinate in his own opinions. However, he combined his change of opinion and measures, with an *inflexibility of principle*, and a firm consciencious rectitude of intention and purpose: A change of opinion, or measures, is no change of principle.

You see that I have no intention to say, or even to intimate, that he never erred in judgment, and in the actions of life. Nay, I admit, and I believe, that he frequently did err in opinion; and that from an error of judgment, he sometimes erred in practice. We have known him to be convinced; and, yielding to conviction, candidly to acknowledge that he had been wrong; and then honestly to correct himself. His aim was to follow the light of truth, to think, to speak, and to act right. This was evidence of an upright purpose of mind; and is mentioned, and considered, as being respectful and ho-

norable to his memory. Is it not a maxim in theology, in ethicks, and philosophy, That a good man will always be open to conviction from the light of truth? And will gladly relinquish error, in sentiment or practice, upon a conviction of wrong, by the evidence of truth? Is it not honorable, dignified, and virtuous so to do? And, is not the opposite disposition both mean and criminal? "An error of judgment is no corruption of principle." An error of judgment and opinion, only shews the infirmity and fallibility of man, in the imperfections of his intellectual capacity, and is the common frailty of all, even of the wisest, and of the best. But corruption of principle, shows a vile depravity of the human heart, a criminal baseness of mind, and a diabolical defection of the moral principle of the soul; and can only dwell in the bosom of unrighteous and wicked men. There is all the difference imaginable, between an error of opinion, and the criminal, wilful intention of the mind.

Mr. Wesley, in his treatise on "Christian Perfection," admits, that the most holy christians, perfect in Christ Jesus, are liable, and subject, through the infirmity of the human understanding, to error of opinion, and from the error of judgment, are liable, also, to errors of practice. From a number of cases in scripture, we plainly disco-

ver, that some of the most distinguished apostles, and eminent saints, were, in some instances, much mistaken, and fell into errors both of opinion and practice. Paul and Barnabas, once, widely differed in their opinion, and that difference of opinion, led them to adopt and pursue different lines of conduct; both could not be correct. Also, Paul and Peter, two of the most distinguished apostles, came to a pointed opposition; *I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*—Two opposites, cannot both be right. Hence, we learn, that good men may differ in opinion, and be mistaken; and we ought to learn prudence and caution, how we censure, or implicate, or even suspect, other men's upright intentions, or purity of purpose, merely because they differ from us. Possibly, we may be wrong ourselves; *who art thou, that judgest another? Judge not that ye be not judged.* And, even where an error is evident, either in opinion or practice, in things not essential, nor clearly decided by the word of God, we ought to remember, that charity will cover the multitude of faults. The best and the wisest of men, may err and differ; yet, nevertheless, be upright and holy in purpose, and pure in their designs and intentions.

Few men were more correct both in sentiment and practice, than bishop Asbury; and none more upright and pure in their in-

tentions and purposes. We might view his early purposes in life, and follow him, in the leading designs of his soul, through the various stages of life; and what were his objects, his motives, and designs? and what induced him through life to pursue the extraordinary course he did? Passing over his ordinary concerns in life, and things of minor importance, we may direct our attention to his *purpose*, in the ministry of the gospel, as an itinerant missionary, for fifty years. What induced him to encounter, the hardships, perils, reproaches, labours, and the sufferings, connected with that *manner of life?* What *purpose*, led him to leave his native country, the "tenderest of parents," and all his other connexions and friends, and cross the stormy ocean, to come over to a strange land and serve us? I will briefly recite some of his own words, while on the waves of the Atlantic, in 1771, as recorded in his Journal. "Whither am I going? To the New World! What to do? To gain honor or to get money? No!—If I know my own heart, I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do. I know *my views are upright;* may they never be otherwise; may my Lord preserve me in an *upright intention!* Oh! how I wish to spend all my time and talents for him, who spilt his blood for me! I feel my spirit bound to the New-World, and my heart united to the people,

though unknown to me; and I have great cause to believe, that I am not running before I am sent. I feel a strong desire to be given up to God; both body, soul, time, and talents! In this, I comfort myself, that I know *my intention is upright*, and that I have the cause of God at heart. But I want to stand complete, in all the will of God. My spirit mourns, and hungers, and thirsts, after entire purity. Many have been my trials in the course of this voyage, from want of a comfortable bed, suitable and proper provisions; from sickness, and from men, ignorant of God. But all this is nothing. If I cannot bear this, what have I learned?—When I came near the American shore, my very heart melted within me, to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about. May God Almighty keep me as the apple of his eye, till all the storms of life are past! Whatever I do, wherever I go, may I never sin against God; but always do those things that please him!"

In those expressions, and observations, in his Journal, written with his own hand, while on the great deep, he has stated his purpose, intention, and motive, his object, and end; which was to please and glorify God, to win and save souls, to be a servant to all for Christ's sake, and, to secure for himself, not worldly honors, riches, ease,

applause, or pleasure, but, an incorruptible inheritance, an unfading crown of glory, and eternal life. Throughout the course of his life, he appeared to adhere to the same undeviating *purpose* of soul; not to accumulate earthly wealth or treasure; not to gain worldly applause, honor or fame; not to seek bodily ease, gratifications, or pleasures; but to follow Christ through much tribulation, and to secure, and lay up for himself, treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Also, his *purpose* was, to use all his talents, his time, his influence, and his labours, prudently and diligently, to the best advantage, and to accomplish the most excellent designs, in the promotion of the cause and honor of God, and for the salvation of man. He gave himself, and all he had, and all he was, to this great business; he lived for nothing else. He was so far from seeking the things of this world, that he carefully avoided every occasion that might lead him into a temptation of the kind; he guarded against every snare and entanglement, every allurement and inducement, every contract and engagement, that had a tendency to draw him, from his great work, into the spirit, and temper, of the world, or into the maxims and customs of the men of this world. He aimed and endeavoured to

bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. He did not live to himself, he sought not his own; but his purpose was, to glorify God, to exalt the Saviour, to promote religion, to save souls, and to preserve the unity, the fellowship, and the peace of brethren. His purpose, was, also, to drive away schism, false doctrines, and evil practices; and to maintain sound wholesome doctrines, good order, regular government and proper discipline.

To accomplish those objects, what sacrifices would he not make? What enjoyments would he not forego? What crosses would he not bear? And what labours and sufferings would he not undergo and endure? Noble spirit! elevated mind! benevolent heart! heavenly purpose! The fixed unalterable purpose of his heart, the invariable bent of his mind, the constant solicitude of his soul, was, to promote and advance the interests and honor of the Redeemer's kingdom. For this he lived, for this he travelled, for this he preached, for this he superintended, and for this he laboured and suffered, in faith, and patience, till life sunk, and he expired, beneath the load. How far, his *pious purpose* was accomplished, is pretty well known to have been extensively great, and even beyond his own expectations. The recital of which we must now leave.

Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, and MY FAITH. *Faith,* is particularly connected with *doctrine, manner of life,* and *purpose. Doctrine,* lays the foundation of the system of our religion; *faith,* in those *doctrines,* is the principle that puts the volitions of the mind into action, and forms the purposes, or the motives of the heart, and produces obedience to the injunctions and precepts founded on those *doctrines;* and thus regulates and governs the actions and the *manner of life.* So that, while we consider *faith,* we must of course, occasionally refer to *doctrines,* and to *manner of life.*

The term *Faith,* literally and simply, signifies a conviction and confidence of the mind, or a belief and assurance of the soul, on the authority of testimony, and force of evidence; that a proposition, or doctrine, is certainly true. Hence I may observe, without entering minutely, or elaborately, into an exposition and illustration of the extensive question or subject of faith, generally, that a divine faith, has for its objects, a divine proposition, or doctrine, accompanied by a divine testimony, or supernatural evidence; under the influence, force, and authority of which, the mind receives a conviction, and confidence, that the divine doctrine is true. Similar remarks might be made with respect to any other faith; corresponding in name,

and nature, with its objects, and evidences; whether historical, philosophical, or theological. Whatever the proposition or doctrine is, it requires testimony, or evidence, correspondent with its nature, to support and and prove its truth. All faith implies a credent capacity, or moral faculty, possessing power to believe; for we cannot do that, for which we have no ability; and it would appear, that there is also a capability to withhold, or to yield the consent of the mind, to the truth of a proposition; otherwise, we could not, as free agents, be accountable for faith, or unbelief. A good and benevolent Being, would never require and demand, under severe penalties, that of us, for which, no ability, or power, was ever given us to perform, or even to choose; and which of course, would be impossible for us to do, farther than necessity was laid upon us. In cases of necessity, or impossibility, there cannot be a free agency, nor any accountability, and of course, neither vice nor virtue, neither rewards nor punishments, upon principles of justice and mercy. Faith, also signifies a doctrine, or proposition, as an object, or CREDENDA, to exercise the *credent capacity* upon. It likewise implies, testimony or evidence, to prove the truth of the doctrine, whether human or divine, as the case may be, to the conviction and belief of the ra-

tional mind. Thus under the influence of evidence, the mind receives conviction, that the proposition or doctrine is true, and the credent capacity, less or more, exercises a confidence or belief, in the truth of such doctrine. Then the fruits and effects of faith, will follow, in our life and conduct; in proportion to the strength of our faith, according to the nature and importance of the thing believed, and in proportion to the degree of interest we feel, or *purpose* to take, in the subject matter of the truth of the doctrine believed. I conceive that this will apply to all faith, whether historical, speculative, temporary, philosophical, secular, legal, or evangelical. Hence it will follow, that saving evangelical faith, is the voluntary exercise of our rational, moral, credent capacity, in the firm belief of the truth of God in Jesus Christ; under the influence, and authority, of divine testimony, and evangelical evidence, set home, with divine power, upon the soul; and producing a supernatural conviction, or the witness of God, upon the heart and mind; from which, the fruits of righteousness, spring up and grow, both in the heart and life. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God Faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Faith works by love, and purifies*

the heart. Faith, if it hath not works is dead. I will shew thee my faith by my works. In the Methodist Magazine, it is said, "Believing right, may have a hundred different meanings; faith, in general, is, a divine evidence of things unseen." In Hervey's recommendation of Marshall's Gospel mystery of Sanctification, it is said, in a note, "We must not expect to have faith, wrought in us, by some fatality of supernatural operations, without any application or endeavour of our own." Faith, though an act of our own, in the believing of God's truth; yet, *it does not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.*

The term *faith*, is sometimes applied to the tenets, doctrines, and articles of any *belief;* which are called *the faith* of those who hold and believe them. In this sense, there is the Pagan faith, the Mahometan faith, the Jewish faith, the Christian faith, and the apostle even speaks of the faith of devils, they believe and tremble; thereby distinguishing one system of doctrines, of religion, of sects, and of sectarian and party opinions, from another. In this sense, it was, that Paul "preached the faith which before he destroyed;" that is, the gospel, and the Christian religion. "Contend earnestly for the faith;" "Be sound in the faith." At other times, the term faith, signifies, fideli-

ty, veracity, honesty, and diligence, in performing engagements, in executing trusts, and in fulfilling obligations.—Taking the gospel faith, or the Christian faith, in all its evangelical significations, objects, evidences, excitements, exercises, fruits and effects, upon the heart and life, as spoken of in the scriptures of truth, and how does it divinely stand, in glorious opposition to, and in clear distinction from, the faith of Pagans, of Mahometans, and of all other men of corrupt minds, who are *given up to strong delusions to believe a lie;* and being to every good work reprobate. Lord preserve us in the faith of the gospel, and keep us from infidelity, licentiousness, and delusion! Away with false systems of faith.

The venerable Asbury, in the scriptural sense of the word, in the evangelical meaning of the term, as it relates to the objects, the exercise, and the blessed fruits of faith, was firm, strong, clear, and unfeigned in the faith of the gospel. The life that he lived, in the flesh, was by the faith of the Son of God. He stood steadfast, and he walked circumspectly in the faith; he prayed, he preached, he laboured, he suffered, and he died, triumphantly in the faith. He, constantly and perseveringly defended, supported, and maintained the faith. We have fully known, how eminently he lived, in the

exercise, the comforts, the victories, and the fruits of faith, in his own soul, and manner of life. He let his light so shine before men, that others saw his good works, flowing from a living faith; and by the influence of his example, of obedient faith, many were brought to glorify God. We seldom found so great faith, no, not in all Israel.

Brethren, *We are saved by grace, through faith*, and that, not of ourselves, not of works, it is the gift of God. Our salvation, by grace, through faith, is God's gift; and God be thanked for the unspeakable gift. It is God's gift, that we obtain salvation at all, even by grace through faith. It is through the free grace of God, that salvation is tendered to us, and that we are enabled, and capacitated, to believe, and to receive Christ, by faith, and to believe to the saving of the soul; and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness in the practice of piety and holy living. Faith, when without works, is dead, being alone, without piety, without holy living; or too often, by men of perverted minds, it is reconciled to, and associated with, deeds of darkness; such a fruitless, or licentious faith, is called an antinomian faith, and it is abominable to God, and to all good men.

Works without faith, is only self righteousness, and is called pharisaism; denying the necessity, and being destitute of commu-

nion with God, and fellowship with the Father and the Son. But that faith, which, unfeignedly embraces all the truths of God in Jesus Christ, "which, takes God at his word," and which produces good works, in obedience to all the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, in holiness of heart, and purity of life, may truly be called "evangelical faith." Without this faith, how is it possible that we can please God? And without this holiness of heart, and purity of life, this experience and practice of religion, so as to please God, how can we be accepted of him? And if we do not please God, and are not accepted of him, how is it possible for us to be saved? *He that believeth not, shall not see life; but, all things are possible to him that believeth.—This is the victory, that overcometh the world, even our faith. The just, shall live by faith.* May God make us faithful unto death! *O, Lord! increase our faith!* Make us strong, unfeigned, victorious, and triumphant in the faith! O, that we may all live and die in the faith of the Son of God! Glorious conquering faith! Oh, Asbury! Great was thy faith! Whose faith, let us follow.

Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, and MY LONG-SUFFERING. It must be very obvious, that on this part of the subject, we shall have to reca-

pitulate, or notice again, some things, already touched upon, in the *manner of his life*. *Long-suffering*, is one of the most important traits, and striking features, in the christian manner of life, and closely connected with *purpose*, *faith*, *charity*, and *patience*. *Long-suffering*, signifies, to bear a long time, to endure, to undergo, to feel a sense of pain, to support; and not to sink under affliction, injuries, troubles, labours, and persecutions; and to pass through them, with resignation, patience, composure, meekness, and fortitude of soul.

The Long- suffering of Paul, is recorded at large, with his manner of life, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in his own Epistles. He renounced ease and security, and sacrificed fame and worldly glory, and encountered perils and hardships, by land and by sea; he had stripes, bonds, and imprisonments; watchings, weariness, painfulness, and want of apparel; necessities, hunger, labours, persecutions, and afflictions; among the Jews, the Gentiles, and false brethren; and withal, had on him, daily, the care of all the churches. But his consolation was, *I count not the long-suffering of this present time, worthy to be compared to the glory, which shall hereafter be revealed.* "If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him." "Rejoice, in as much as you are made

partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." If any man suffer as a christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God." *For our light affliction, which endureth but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*—Observe, and O, my soul rejoice! For *affliction*, there is *glory*; for *light* affliction, a *weight* of glory; for light affliction, which *endureth but for a moment*, a weight of glory, *far more exceeding and eternal!* "Wherefore, let them that *suffer according to the will of God*, commit the keeping of their souls and bodies unto him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. They that live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Hallelujah! Let us stand in our lot, and while we suffer, let us rejoice in hope of the glory which shall hereafter be revealed! Our suffering time will soon be over.

It may not be necessary to give a minute or particular detail of the complicated *long-sufferings* of our departed venerable Friend. In his Journal, on certain trials he says, "It was grievous to flesh and blood; but, when others suffer so much for temporal interest, surely I may suffer a little, for the glory of God, and for the good of souls.—

Oh! what would not one do, what would he not suffer, to be useful to souls, and to do the will of his great Master! The more troubles I meet with, the more convinced I am, that I am doing the will of God." "I expect trouble; this I expected when I left England, and I am willing to suffer; yea, to die, sooner than betray so good a cause! I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand. No cross, no suffering I decline; only let all my heart be thine"—He had his infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecution, temptations, trials, sorrows, and sufferings; of divers kinds, from different quarters, and in various degrees; these he bore in their regular gradations, not merely with common resignation, but with joy and triumph; not with submission only, but with gladness and glory. "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." He suffered himself, as courageously as he taught others to suffer.

Only review his *manner of life*, on which, in its place, we dwelt at considerable length, yet all that was there said, only gave an epitome of his life, and brief touches on his trials and long-sufferings. Take into consideration the multiplicity, and diversity, of

trying and conflicting scenes through which he passed, both among friends and enemies, in prosperity and adversity, in good report and evil report, in health and sickness, in fatigues, toils, afflictions and distresses; also reflect upon the multitude and magnitude of his arduous labours, his complicated cares, his extensive journies, his great exposures, by land and water, in the wilderness, the mountains, and the solitary places; his conflicting trials, his perplexing temptations; together with his critical responsibility to God, to the church, to the ministry, and to the world; only let the amplitude of thought, embrace one general and comprehensive view of him, in all his circumstances, situations, movements, and employments, in his tempestuous and dangerous voyage and journey through life, for more than threescore years and ten, passing through a wicked world, and in the midst of crooked and perverse generations; about fifty five years, a professor of religion, on his pilgrimage, encountering, and exposed to, the hardships and trials, through which, the travellers to Zion have to pass, like the children of Israel, journeying from Egypt, through the wilderness, to the promised land; also, as a preacher of the cross, enlisted as a soldier of Christ, having daily to fight the good fight of faith, against the world, the flesh,

and the devil; and for half a century employed, and deligently engaged, in itinerant missionary services, as an ambassador for Christ, first in Europe, and then, forty five years in America; and then, your minds will more readily embrace a view of the fulness of the Measure of his *long-sufferings*, than at this time can possibly be described.

But, my brethren, he did not suffer as an evil doer, or as a busy body, in other men's matters; he suffered in well doing, as a christian and as a christian minister. He bore and endured all for the sake of Christ, for religion, for the church, and for the salvation of souls. He had often to bear the winter's pinching cold; and to face, and combat, the storms, and sometimes the tempests, of wind, rain, hail, and snow. Had he not, on long and fatiguing journies, to endure the summer's oppressive heat, like pilgrims on the scorching sands, beneath a burning sky? Had he not to suffer hunger, thirst, painful weariness, hard lodging, and restless nights? Had he not lingering afflictions of body, and accute diseases, often brought on him by great exposures, hard labours, much fatigue, and the want of the necessary comforts of life? Were not the malignant tongues of strife, and the invidious pens of slander, sometimes directed against him? were not his best purposes, and most upright designs,

sometimes misrepresented and distorted?—Were not evil, and unworthy motives, falsely, insiduously, and wickedly imputed to him? And withal, had he not the ponderous weight, and arduous daily care of all the churches upon him? Was not this a continual source of painful solicitude, and anxious concern unto him? Did not this occasion restless nights, and sorrowful days to him? What gave him more trouble, or such keen distress, at any time, as to see any disorder, or evils in the church, which tended to injure the cause of God, to produce mischief among professors, or ruin to precious souls? What wounded his feelings, affected his heart, and grieved his soul, so much, as variance and hateful discord among brethren; or the spirit and practice of heart and church division, which, unfortunately, sometimes appeared? The appearance of strange and false doctrines, the existance of infidelity, the prevailance of crimes, or the backsliding of professors, pierced him with bitter anguish, overwhelmed his mind, depressed and sunk his spirits, and made him groan with disquietude of soul. Might we not say he was cast down, but not in despair; poor, but making many rich; always sorrowing, yet rejoicing; persecuted, but not forsaken; greatly distressed, yet comforted; full of trouble yet happy; *long-suffering* with painful afflic-

tion of divers kinds, both of body and mind, yet exulting with gladness and joy, from the consolations of grace, and from the anticipation of the glory hereafter to be revealed? The temporal sufferings and painful distresses, which sometimes befel his brethren, wounded his sensibility. The persecutions, reproaches, and oppositions, which they sometimes met with, especially, the distresses, in the time of the revolutionary war, which befell himself and others, were sourses of unspeakable trial and sorrow, for the exercise of *long-suffering*. But nothing hurt him so much, as the spiritual sufferings and injuries of the flock of Christ, the church of God, the cause of religion, and the souls of the people. Especially, when Christ was wounded in the house of his friends, it gave him inexpressible, and may I not say, almost insupportable pain, sorrowful heaviness, and anguish of mind.

We have fully known his *long-suffering*. Alas! what did he not endure; what did he not undergo; what did he not bear; how much, how long, how patiently, and how perseveringly, he held out to the end, in his long-suffering, for the salvation of men, for the promotion of religion, and for the glory of God! We have seen him, on such occasions, beset on every side; we have heard his sympathetic sighs, and witnessed his

heart affecting groans; we have beheld his sorrowful anguish, and painful disquietude. "Mine eye, said one, runneth down with tears, because men keep not thy law." Oh! said another, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep, for the slain of the daughters of my people! I have warned you, said Paul, night and day, from house to house, with tears; I have told you often, said he, and now tell you even weeping, that many walk who are enemies to the cross of Christ. The prophets and apostles had continual sorrow and heaviness; and Asbury could not expect to be exempted.

We have been with our venerable Asbury, in some of his sorest conflicts, while ascending and descending the mountains of difficulties, and passing through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil; for the divine rod, and the staff, did comfort him. We have seen him in the fires of affliction, yet unconsumed, and in the waters of difficulties, ready to overflow him, yet preserved. We have witnessed him by night and by day, we have attended and watched with him on the bed of languishing, pain and distress; and we have known his long-suffering.

He counted not his life dear unto himself, so that he might fulfil the work his Master

had assigned him to do; he wished to accomplish all the good and perfect will of God concerning him; in all he had to do, and in all he had to suffer. His valuable life was filled up with useful employment; he was worn down and exhausted with labour and suffering; he was often tired *in* the work; but he was never tired *of* the work. He was willing to hold on, and to hold out, so long as he could ride, walk, stand, or speak; until his Lord and Master, whom he loved, and delighted to serve, should call him home, from labour and sufferings, to his great reward. Then, and not till then, he was willing to go; and then, with gladness, with joy, and triumph, he ceased at once, to labour, to suffer, and to live.

The last sermon he preached, it appears that he could neither stand nor walk: but he said, "*God had given him a work to do, and he must deliver his testimony.*" "At that time, he was carried into the meeting house, and sat in the pulpit, upon a table, where he preached his last Discourse from these words, *For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.* He spake almost an hour, and when done, was almost spent." This was only the Sabbath before he died.

Although the curtain of life is dropped,

and the past scenes are over, and closed up forever; yet it appears, as if I could almost see him, sitting in yonder room, or pensively walking the floor; and, as if I could hear his voice, singing some of his favourite pensive airs, suited to the state of his mind, in troubles and distress. I have often heard him on such occasions, sing, among other most solemn airs, the following lines; and his pensive melodious voice, now seems sounding in my ears: permit me to rehearse one favourite hymn, which he used to sing in the tune called "Light-Street."

Still out of the deepest abyss,
  Of trouble I mournfully cry;
And pine to recover my peace,
  To see my Redeemer and die;
I cannot, I cannot forbear,
  These passionate longings for home;
O, when shall my spirit be there!
  O, when will the messenger come!

Thy nature I long to put on;
  Thine image on earth to regain;
And then, in the grave to lay down
  This burden of body and pain.
O, Jesus, in pity draw near,
  And lull me to sleep on thy breast;
Appear, to my rescue appear,
  And gather me into thy rest.

To take a poor fugitive in,
  The arms of thy mercy display,
And give me to rest from all sin,
  And bear me triumphant away;

Away from a world of distress;
Away to the mansions above;
The heaven, of seeing thy face—
The heaven, of feeling thy love.

Through much tribulation we have to enter into the kingdom of God. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord, delivereth him out of them all. And when the Judge of all the earth, shall call home his saints, in the great eternal day, *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. These are they, who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, are they before the throne of God; and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell among them.*

Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, and MY CHARITY. Here we may truly observe, that *charity*, is the most prominent trait, and distinguishing feature, in the christian character, and his manner of life. While on this head, we shall have to touch upon, and occasionally to recapitulate, some things already noticed.

Charity, is of the same import as the word *Love;* and signifies, that attachment or affection of the mind, which arises in the heart, on beholding, or contemplating, any object or thing, which appears congenial to our views, as calculated to contribute to our happiness, or, that is desirable in its nature,

and pleasing in its appearance.—It is mostly applied, in theology, to that gracious affection, or principle and disposition of the soul, wrought by the illuminating, renovating, and purifying influences of the Divine Spirit of grace; whereby, we are led to esteem, desire, and delight in God; and to admire his attributes, love his perfections, and adore his holy and sacred character. Under the influence of this sacred charity, we are excited to delight in religion and the worship of God. Being pleased with his nature, desiring his presence and favour, approving his will, and commandments, we are influenced to take pleasure in his service, to delight in his commandments, and, with joy and gladness, to dedicate ourselves, both soul and body, to all the known rules and practices of piety in the faithful discharge of every known duty, which we owe either to God or man. In the possession of this *charity*, we are made the partakers of the *divine nature*, and enjoy fellowship, and communion, with the Father and with the Son. This is divine love, or the life of God in the soul of man. *God is love, and he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God dwells in him.*

Charity, is also applied to that christian love, called, by St. Peter, *Fervent charity among yourselves;* Under the influence of which, we have christian affection, brother-

ly kindness, religious fellowship, and the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace; and which, often prevents, and frequently covers the multitudes of sins. There is no one principle so useful, and so necessary to be inculcated among christian brethren, as that of *charity.—Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves.* It is also applied to the principle of good-will, benevolence, compassion, and liberality, toward all mankind, which disposes the heart to do them good, either to soul or body, according to their necessities, and to our ability and opportunities, to give them relief from sufferings, and to contribute to their comfort.

Agreeably to the christian theology, charity is a virtue of universal love to God, and to all mankind; not to be confined, alone, to our friends, but to extend even to our enemies. The root, and constituent principle, from which all its branches spring, and all its fruits grow, is *Divine love;* for *God is love.* He is the *origin* and *source* of love; and nothing makes a man so much like the Author of his being, as that, of a loving, benevolent soul. It is the image of God; so that, he *who dwells in love, dwells in God, and God dwells in him. We love him, because he first loved us.*

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself; for

on these two, hang all the law and the prophets. A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another. We ought also to notice his further injunction, *Love them that hate you, bless them that curse you, do good to them that do evil to you, and pray for them that despitefully use you. Love your enemies. Charity is kind,* even to them who do us wrongs, and injuries, and inflict long-sufferings upon us. *Charity never faileth.—Love is the fulfilling of the law.—The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.* Its whole bent, inclination, and very nature is to do good, to promote and to secure the greatest good. And to do unto others, as we would have others to do unto us. Golden rule, and glorious principle! How it promotes human happiness, and redounds to the honor and glory of God!

Charity, in all its diversity of excitements, influences, and operations, upon the pious and devout heart, and soul, causes an expansion, of all its virtuous powers, in warm emotions of gracious affection, of gratitude, of obedience, and of adoration towards God; and of christian affection, brotherly kindness, religious fellowship, liberality of sentiment, and union of spirit, among the people of God; and it goes out in tender sympathies, compassion, benevolence, mercy, and loving kindness, to all mankind.

Yea, a good heart, a loving soul, a merciful mind, will feel bowels of compassion, and merciful kindness, even to a beast. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

Without *charity*, all our professions of religion, and pretensions to piety, are vain. "Though we could speak with the tongues of men and angels, and had the gift of prophecy, and understood all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though we have all faith, so as to remove mountains; and though we bestow all our goods to the poor, and give our bodies to be burned; yet, if we have not charity, we are only as sounding brass, and tinkling symbols; we are nothing."

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity; but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things. Charity never faileth. Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. *Charity*, that bright offspring of heaven, how much it makes the saints resemble their God. It is a transcript of the divine nature; it is the brightness of his glory; and in this, DEITY HIMSELF shines forth, *Glorious in holiness!*

Without dwelling longer on the descrip-

tion and detail of charity, in its nature, its objects, its work and its fruits, I may just observe, that it stands related to God, and to man, and to every thing, in earth or heaven, that is virtuous, amiable, good, and glorious. *It is the bond of perfectness*, which unites, God to man, and man to God; and which, is the chief means to a perfect union among all the members of the church, and to make their gifts and graces subservient to the good of one another. O, how it makes the cheerful feet, in swift obedience move! And O, how it will tune, and strike, the joyful strings, in the sweet realms of bliss!

I might now appeal to you, my brethren, who have so long, and *fully known*, the *doctrines, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-sufferings*, and *charity*, of our late venerable Bishop, how far his gracious affections, correct principles, pious dispositions, and holy living, toward God, and toward man, the ways and things of God, the people and cause of God, toward the men of this world, and even toward his enemies, corresponded with this brief exposition and description of charity. Was it not well known, that he had a great degree of benevolence, an ample stock of christian charity? Nay, was not his whole life, and all he was, and all he had, employed and spent, in one continual, uninterrupted, act of charity? For

what else, did he live; for what else, did he labour: for what else, did he suffer? What other purpose, had he in view; and what other end, did he aim at? He appeared to live for no other purpose, than to do good, and to glorify God. Yea, have we not seen, have we not known, and have we not enjoyed, his labours of love; the work, and the fruits, of his benevolence and charity? Many who were rich, have of their abundance given much, and have been much commended; but hath not he, who has given himself, and all that he had, given, *more than they all?*

He did not possess much of the things of this world; therefore, he could almost say, like the apostle Peter, *Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee.*

Gold and silver, he had but little, at any time, nor any other property; and therefore, from want of pecuniary means, he could not distribute, abundantly, of the good things of this life, such as food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, and other temporal relief to the needy and distressed; but, of such as he had, even of temporal things, he was always ready to communicate. If he had two garments of one kind, and saw a poor brother in need, would he not cheerfully give him one? And would he not readily divide the contents of his scanty purse,

with a brother who was destitute? A portion of the liberality of benevolent friends, toward himself, he would distribute among his needy and dependent brethren. Linens, woollens, stockings, and other articles of supplies, he frequently received, from his kind and liberal friends in one place, and conveyed them to the relief and comfort of those brethren, who were necessitous, in the more remote and poor parts of the country. Thereby, he often cheered the hearts, and relieved the wants, of those who were suffering and distressed. And when his own stock, or resources failed, he then, used his interest, and influence, with others who were able to supply his lack of means, by contributing, of their temporal good things, to the relief and comfort of the destitute. This was particularly exemplified, in his obtaining subscriptions, and donations, in one part of the country, where they abounded in plenty, and in taking, or carefully conveying, such contributions to the relief of those, in other parts, where they were deficient. Such collections and supplies, have frequently been carefully conveyed hundreds of miles, and charitably distributed among the needy brethren, as the liberality of their distant friends, sent to relieve their wants, and to enable them to go on, in their missionary labours of love, in spreading the word of

life and salvation, among those, who, for want of means, were not able, or those, who, for want of grace, were not willing, to support the ministry of the gospel among themselves. Great, and most excellent, consequences, have resulted from this benevolent and charitable mode of procedure: thereby, the gospel of the grace of God, was carried to the remote and solitary places of the country. The poor had the gospel preached to them, and sinners were taught the way of salvation; who, but for this plan, might have lived and died, without hearing the joyful sound of gospel grace. The mountains, the wilderness, the remote settlements, were visited; and many of the poor lost sheep of Israel, were found, and brought home into the fold of Christ. The praises of God were heard, in the log-houses, covered with slabs or bark; and the poor wretched inhabitants of miserable huts, and forlorn cottages, were brought to be the subjects of converting, justifying, and sanctifying grace, and to rejoice in God their Saviour.

The venerable Asbury, had his whole heart and soul, zealously, benevolently, and charitably, set upon, and engaged in this blessed work; and in raising and supplying the means to carry it on. This, among other instances, was particularly manifested in,

what he called, *The Mite subscription;* which he had always with him, wherever he went, from north to south, from east to west, and presented it to those who were able and willing to contribute their mite (none were to subscribe, to this fund, more than one dollar) for the laudable, and charitable purpose, of spreading the gospel, far and wide, throughout the land; and to supply the necessities of the travelling preachers, in their missionary labours, where they could not get a sufficient support from the people. In this, may be considered, at least, a threefold object of charity: the instruction, and the salvation of the people, to whom the gospel was sent; the comfort, and support of those who went to preach it; to send the gospel to the poor, who were not able, and to others, who were not willing, to bear the expense; and also, the good and happiness of those, who, thereby, might contribute to the charity, and participate in the reward, of aiding, in the spread of the gospel. *It being more blessed to give, than to receive:* He was not unmindful, to "Charge them that were rich in this world; that they should do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come." And like the apostle, who exhorted the Corinthians,

the Galatians, and others, concerning the collections, for the needy saints at Jerusalem, he let them know, that *God loveth a cheerful giver.*

His *charity*, and liberality of sentiment was extended toward those who differed from him in opinions and modes of worship. He manifested a disposition of love, good-will, and amity, toward the ministers and people of different denominations of christians; always making a charitable, or liberal allowance, for their different opinions, modes, and forms; especially, in all points not essential. It is well known, that he endeavoured to cultivate a good understanding, and to promote friendship, and christian intercourse, between the ministers and people of his own charge, and the ministers and people of other communities. O that we could see that amiable disposition of christian charity, among the different professors of religion, of every name, so prevail, and triumph, as to kill and destroy, and bury forever, the narrow, contracted spirit, of hateful bigotry, strife, and discord.

His charity, was also exemplified in his christian lenity, great forbearance, and much long-suffering, toward those of his own charge, who were suspected, or charged, with error of sentiment, false doctrines

imprudence of tempers, unguarded words, or irregularity of conduct; being careful to make up no sudden decision against them, without credible, competent, and full evidence—and, where the word of God would admit of it, to bear with them for a season; reproving, admonishing, counselling, and labouring with them; if possible to accomplish their conviction, amendment, and reformation. Being unwilling, to cut off any member, whether in, or out of conference, until every prudential, and christian means, to reclaim, recover, and save them, had been used, and failed. We speak that, which we have seen, and testify that, which we have known. O, let us follow his example, in this line of conduct, in this charitable forbearance with each other! *With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Let all wrath, and bitterness, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; be kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye each others joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, of one ac-*

cord, of one mind. Doing nothing through strife or vain glory.

Even to his worst enemies, he sought to do good. If they reviled, he reviled not again. He returned not evil for evil; but contrariwise, good for evil, and blessing instead of cursing. He aimed at the grand injunction. *Love your enemies. Love them that hate you, bless them that curse you, do good to them that do evil to you, and pray for them that dispitefully use you.*

What could he do, that he did not do? For he exhausted all his strength, broke down his constitution, spent his talents and his all, and wore out his life, for the good of man, and for the glory of God. His labour of love continued, so long as he had the power of action or the gift of speech. He would have done more, had it been in his power; he did all that he could, even to the end. Wherein he failed in the full accomplishment of his benevolent purposes, and his charitable designs, in the furtherance of the gospel, and in doing good; and wherein he came short of his capacious desires, in the universal spread of light and truth, it was not for want of a burning zeal, and a fervent charity; which continually prompted his willing mind, to uncommon diligence, great sacrifices, and to arduous, constant, and indefatigable efforts and

labours. All human means have limits, all finite things have bounds and terminations. Much was done by him; and, there remains much for us yet to do; as he did, *so go ye and do likewise.*

However, he had an unspeakable consolation in this, that God wonderfully prospered his labours of love; and gave astonishing success to his unwearied perseverance in well doing. Indeed, the Lord gave amazing prosperity to the cause, and to the ministry, which he superintended; and daily enlarged the borders of Zion; adding thousands to the church, from year to year; and that, to the admiration of God's people, and to the astonishment of the world. He lived to see, under his directions, about seven hundred itinerant preachers, in the unity of the spirit, successfully engaged in this all important work; and also, two or three thousand local preachers, as auxilaries, employed in promoting the blessed Redeemer's cause; beside a vast number of exhorters, class leaders, and other official men, amounting to many thousands of praying, and useful labourers, taking an active and zealous part in this great and glorious work. And, at the time of his death, according to the actual returns, of the numbers, from the several districts and circuits, respectively and collectively, there were upwards of two hundred

thousand members, of the Methodist Episcopal church, who were looking up to him, as their chief spiritual head, and bishop, under Christ; and over whom, he had the general superintendence. And it has been supposed, with some probability, that not less than one million of hearers, attended the congregations, and the ministry, of the Methodist preachers, under his immediate superintendence. Truly, God has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. And has all this great and wonderful work, this amazing and astonishing increase, been in the space of fifty years; the time and period of his ministry? When he first came to America, there were not one thousand members in society. He came in 1771, and by the Minutes of conference, for 1773, two years after, there only appears the number of ten preachers, and 1160 members; but now, more than two hundred thousand members. O, Lord, what hast thou wrought! *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!* Beside all these, now, living witnesses, how many thousands have gone home to glory! Who, were, by the blessing of God, made the subjects of grace; through the instrumentality of those laborious men! Our departed venerable Asbury, was prominently, and pre-eminently engaged in this marvellous work from its infancy.

He took the lead, he was called, set apart, and appointed, to the superintendency of it. He has compleated his work, finished his course, and is gone to account for his stewardship, and to receive his eternal reward. *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

Did we ever know, did we ever hear, or did we ever even so much as suspect, from the first to the last, that his charity ever failed; or, that his love ever grew cold? No, he was regularly and uniformly a burning and a shining light. When his happy soul was taking its flight, from this world, to the world of spirits, his last actions, his last words, his last tokens, and his last looks, proclaimed to those around him, that his heart was full of love, of charity divine. See the testimony of brother *John W. Bond*, his dying witness, in a letter, which I purpose introducing to you in the close of this discourse.

He is now done with all sublunary things, his labour of love is ended. His charity, which budded, and blossomed here below, in the kingdom of grace, is now consummated, as the full ripe fruit above, in the kingdom of glory. He has left us behind a little longer, to suffer and mourn. His example of charity, and constancy of love, let us follow, that when we have done with the things

of time, we may meet him in that eternal repose, where grief and parting are no more. There, charity divine, will tune and strike, the joyful strings, in that sweet world of bliss; and melodious sonnets, will be sung, by flaming tongues above! Oh! the ecstatic joys, of that celestial place!

Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, and, MY PATIENCE. *Patience,* is that grace or principle, whereby the people of God, endure or sustain, trials, temptations, injuries, persecutions, privations, and afflictions; and that, with submission to the will of God, in meekness, resignation, tranquillity of mind, and sweet composure, and quietude of spirit; enabling them, with contentment, and fortitude, steadily to persevere, continue, and hold out in well doing; and with cheerfulness to pursue their calling, their labours, and their duties; and, enduring their fatigues and hardships, without murmuring, complaining, fretting, or fainting in their minds; and by which, they humbly, and calmly *wait*, in earnest expectation and confidence, *for the salvation of God, and eternal life.—Here is the* PATIENCE *of the saints.—Let patience have her perfect work*—for, *In your patience possess ye your souls.—Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.—Ye have heard of the patience of Job,*

and have seen the end of the Lord.—Take the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.—Be patient therefore unto the coming of the Lord.—After that Abraham had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.—Be ye therefore patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth near. The scriptures abound with admonitions, and encouragements to patience. Did not *Asbury*, as *the minister of God, in much patience*, endure his *long-suffering*, his *work of faith* and *labour of love*, and that, with *patience of hope*, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father?

Hope, is the great supporter of *patience*; for, *If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it;* and *faith*, which is *the evidence of things not seen*, or the *subsistence of hope*, is, *the substance, as well as the evidence, of the things hoped for.* Hence, *patience* is sustained by *hope*, and *hope* is supported by *faith.* *Faith*, being the evidence, it *realizes unseen* and future things, on the authority of divine testimony, or evidence; *hope*, being the desire and expectation of *unseen things*, or future good, it anticipates that future good, though yet unseen, which faith is the evidence of; or, the believing soul, *realizes it by faith, anticipates it in hope*, and *waits for it with patience.* *Love*, or *chari-*

ty, being the gracious affection of the believing soul, which arises, on beholding, or contemplating, the pleasing and desirable unseen objects, of faith and hope; it is kindled into a warm, or glowing attachment, to the desirable and expected good, even to God himself, who is the divine source and benevolent Author of all good; as represented by the evidence of faith, as expected in the anticipation of hope, and as waited for with the long-suffering of patience. Faith realizes, hope anticipates, love adores, and patience waits, with much long-suffering, through present afflictions, for the manifestation of that glory which shall be revealed.

Thus stands the close connexion, and abiding union, of *faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity.* By God's grace, through the exciting, and stimulating influences, of these three cardinal graces of the Spirit, in unity, upon the heart and soul, the fruits of genuine piety, holy purposes, and practical obedience, are produced; and also, a *patient* continuance in well doing, and long-suffering of the will of God, is manifested in the christian's *manner of life. The husbandman waiteth*, in faith and hope, *for the fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain.*

The obedience of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope, are the most pro-

minent, and distinguishing characteristicks of the children of God.

In every situation, and condition in life, *patience*, is essentially necessary, to the stability and perseverance of the christian; in order to bear him up, under, and to support him, through, the trials, the crosses, the temptations, the sufferings, and conflicts, of this probationary state, and troublesome world. What should we do, and what would become of us, without patience?

We have known, the trials, the temptations, the persecutions, the labours, the hardships, the calamities, and the long-sufferings, of our venerable departed friend; and we also have known his *long patience* under them. But probably, in candour, we ought to admit, that, apparently, he was more deficient, in the exercise of *patience*, than in any one of the christian graces. In some cases, upon some occasions, and at some times, he was thought to be rather irritable and impatient. Perhaps, he did not bear all things, in every situation, and circumstance, in which he was placed, with that pleasantness, calm composure, and sweetness of temper, that could have been wished; and which was desirable, to his best friends, to have seen. If this was his failing, we must place it to the account of human infirmity. The best of men, of whom he was one,

are only men at best. And we must allow, that even the *venerable Francis Asbury*, had some defects; that he was not perfectly free from human frailty. But his many excellencies, threw his failings into the shade. Throwing the mantle of charity, as we are bound to do, over his supposed or real weaknesses, in this, or in any other case; and where is the man, to take him all, and in all, who could bear the test of a critical review, better than he; and, on the question of patience, generally, circumstanced as he was, who possessed and exercised more? When we consider the magnitude, and the multitude, of his cares, labours, sufferings, trials, and difficult perplexities, which he had to encounter and bear; was it not necessary for him to have had, even the meekness of Moses, and the patience of Job? Making those allowances, which the circumstances of his peculiar situation require, and which christian charity demands, we must agree, that, although, on some occasions, he appeared rather unpleasant, and somewhat abrupt, and harsh, toward those about him; yet, to take him in the whole, he *patiently endured*, what few men would, or could have borne. He was also thought, by some, to be rather too much inclined to a suspicious turn of mind; perhaps, this was partly constitutional; and partly, from his knowledge, observation,

and experience of, the instability, the dissimulation, the treachery, and the arts of designing men. The excellent Archbishop Cranmer, once said, in a trying time, when some of his pretended friends had deceived him, "My God, who can be trusted these times?"

Those who travelled with him round the continent, over the mountains, through the wilderness, traversing the distant and solitary places, can tell us; those who have been with him, in the storms of rain and snow, in perils, by night and day, in torrid heat and frigid cold, fatigued, exhausted, and worn down, with labours, afflictions and toils, can inform us, with what patience he endured his temptations and trials; those who have seen, and witnessed, his extraordinary difficulties, perplexities, oppositions, reproaches, sufferings, and most trying conflicts, can let us know, with what patience he bore them all; those who have attended his beds of affliction, and have seen him in torturing pain and restless anguish; and those who have known his complicated concerns, sufficient to try and prove the meekness and patience of any man, can bear witness, with what submission he went through them all. There is brother *Henry Boehm*, for instance, who constantly travelled with him for several years, east and west, north

and south; and, who, has witnessed the *trial of his patience*, in his distresses, temptations, and afflictions abundant, let *him* speak; and others, let *them* testify, how he bore privations, injuries, and wrongs; and when overwhelmed with cares, broken down by extensive journies, hard labours, and oppressive burdens and buffettings, under various afflictions, languishing and dying daily, know how patiently he went on through all. Those who were with him, in his latter days and last moments, and witnessed his afflictions and patience, in the bitter pangs of death, can tell us how patience was perfected in tribulation, and have told us, that patience with her balmy wings, hovered over him, and sustained him to the last. Afflicted so much, that they had to lift him in, and out of his carriage, yet he patiently kept on his way, occasionally preaching, and continuing to travel, even to the last day of his life. A little before he departed, when his voice and his strength both failed him, being asked, "if he found Jesus to be present?"—with an unutterable expression, he looked up, and lifted his hands toward heaven, in token that he should soon be there. He possessed his reason to the last, and when unable to speak, he gave *tokens*, that his soul was staid upon the Lord, in full confidence of his love and fa-

vour, and with resignation and patience. At length, "without a groan, or a complaint, he fell asleep in the arms of his Saviour." His labours, his sufferings, and his life ended together.

> "His body with his charge laid down;
> And ceas'd at once, to work and live."

We have fully known his doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience:—And, we now know, that he made a triumphant end! He hath fought the good fight, he hath finished his course, he hath kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give him, in that day, or has given him: and not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. He is gone to receive his great reward: even a splendid, beautiful, glorious, CROWN OF LIFE, enriched with celestial gems, resplendent with diamonds of heavenly lustre; resembling *His*, whose *Crown* is a crown of many stars.

I have been longer on this subject, than I contemplated, or expected. The great and interesting importance of the subject matter of the text, and the superexcellence of the character and personage, to whom it originally related, and the *venerable charac-*

ter, to whom we have now applied it, opened an extensive field of abundant matter, which I scarsely knew how to dispose of with more brevity: and after all, it is far from being exhausted. It demanded, and merited, a more extensive illustration, and a more full and particular exposition, and application, than our time or ability, at the present, will admit of. Both the text and the excellence of the two characters spoken of, Paul and Asbury, deserved a more able speaker to do them complete and ample justice. However, *If there be a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* At some future period, no doubt, we shall have the BIOGRAHHY or MEMOIRS, of the *Character*, the *Life*, and the *Labours* of BISHOP ASBURY; written and published, by some able hand, having time sufficient, and so well qualified with talents, and so well furnished with matter, documents, and information, as to do complete justice to the *Subject;* and to render it a blessing to individuals, to the church, to the world, and to future generations. *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

We must now draw to a close. And what shall I say? Our ASBURY IS DEAD! His life was dear and valuable, precious and useful, to his friends, to the church, and to

the world: in which, we took much interest; with which, we were much delighted; by which, we were much benefited; for which, and that we had it so long, we desire to be thankful to God. But now, alas! his life is passed away, and is gone; he is no more; on the account of which, we are clothed in mourning, we sit in lamentation, our hearts are filled with sorrow, and our eyes are bathed in tears! Are we left as fatherless children? We had, and have, many brethren, many teachers, and instructors; but, we had only one father, and he is no more. Is the church left as in a widowed state? Are our joys, which we usually had, at seeing and hearing the venerable man, now turned into sorrow and sighing, and our gladness, into weeping and tears? Ah, brethren! we shall see him no more on earth. We have come to the house of mourning; the temple of the Lord is filled with grief; the house of God with sorrow and lamentation! But, let us not sorrow as without hope. Our loss, is his infinite gain. Oh! *Asbury*, *Asbury!* Thou wouldst not return to earth again; no, not for all the honours, the riches, the pleasures, and the splendid glories that this world can bestow! He will no more return to us, but we shall follow him. He has left us behind, to suffer and mourn a little while longer. He left us

with hopeful expectations, that we would follow on to know the Lord; and at the close of life, meet him again, in that glorious rest which remains to the people of God. If we at last ascend the mountain of the Lord's house, and enter into the tabernacle of his glory; there we shall again see our *Asbury*, seated among the righteous Patriarchs, the holy Prophets, the blessed Apostles, the suffering conquering Martyrs, and all the glorified Saints, who have lived and died in the faith; and which constitute the church of the first born, in heaven.

When *Elijah* went up to glory, *Elisha* saw him ascend, and cryed out, *My father, my father! and he saw him no more.* He took up the *mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and the sons of the prophets said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.* Our Elijah is gone up; let us hope and pray that his fallen mantle will be taken up carefully; and that the spirit of our Elijah, will rest upon our Elisha, or Elishas; and that we shall have, and continue to have, a head and a leader, among the prophets of Israel. Oh, that a double portion of his spirit, may rest and remain upon those, who take up his mantle, and fill his office and place! And Oh Lord! Grant that the same spirit may abundantly rest upon us all, in

power divine!—If we are only faithful to God, he will be with us, provide for us, and abundantly bless us. He will not leave us, nor cast us off from his favour, unless we first depart from him, and from his ways. That God, who sticketh closer than a brother, and is better than ten sons; who is a Husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless children, will be our God and our Friend. Though the great and good, the beloved and useful, *Francis Asbury*, who was so indefatigable and persevering, in well doing, and was so useful in serving the Methodist connexion, has now gone down with his ancestors to the grave, the house appointed for all living, and sleeps beneath the clods of the valley; yet, while we have God among us, we need not fear. If the Lord is for us, who can be against us? Who can harm us, if we but follow after that which is good?

Bishop Asbury, died at 4 o'clock, on Sunday, the 31st day of March, in the year of our Lord 1816; in the 71st year of his age; about the 56th of his profession of religion, as a witness of God's pardoning love; the 50th of his regular Itinerant Ministry; the 45th of his extensive travels and extraordinary labours in America; and the 32d of his Episcopate, or Superintendency, as Bishop, of the Methodist-Episcopal-Church. *His works shall praise him in the gates of Zion.*

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; the end of that man is peace. May we die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like his!

Now, to sum up the whole, and come to a conclusion; let me briefly recall your attention to the character, to the different items in the text, and to the different divisions of the discourse; and permit me to make an application of the whole. You have fully known *Francis Asbury*, as an excellent man, a pious christian, a laborious useful minister, and a diligent faithful superintendent of the church of Christ.—You have fully known his system of *Doctrine*, and that it was scriptural, sound, and wholesome; I will therefore enjoin, and enforce it upon you, my brethren of the ministry, that you diligently follow his doctrine, and faithfully teach it to others. Take heed *unto yourselves*, and *unto the doctrine;* continue in them: for in doing this, ye shall both save yourselves and them that hear you.—His *manner of life*, hath laid down an excellent example, of christian piety, and of ministerial diligence and fidelity, *for us*, as christians, and preachers of the gospel, to imitate; let us carefully and diligently keep our own souls alive to God, and live in the exercise of all the graces of the spirit, and in the whole practice of piety, in all the duties of religion; and, as ministers,

let us never forget, nor neglect, to copy after the pattern laid down before us.—His upright, holy *Purpose*, his pure intention, and his godly designs, we ought to remember, and endeavour to act with equally pure purposes, and holy intentions, in all that we do. —His unfeigned *Faith*, in all the truths of the gospel, in all the doctrines of Christ, and in his distinguished fidelity, in the exercise and fruits of faith, we ought diligently to follow, and also, in all that charge which was committed unto him, as a steward in the household of God; for like Moses he was faithful in all his house, as an example for us to follow. And let us also take him for an example in the spirit and disposition of much *Long-suffering*, and christian forbearance; let us learn the lesson, to bear, and to endure, all the good pleasure of God's holy and perfect will concerning us; both in what we have to do, and in all that we have to suffer.—His *Charity*, Did he bestow his time, his talents, his all, for the good of others, for the benefit of man, for the salvation of souls, and for the glory of God? Did *the love of Christ constrain him;* did the *Divine love*, so burn upon the altar of his devout heart, as to produce that ardent flame of love, and benevolence of soul to man, which led him to go forth, spending all he had, and all he was, in soul, body, and spi-

rit, in the diffusion of benefits, to the souls and bodies of men, and that to the utmost of his ability? *Go thou, and do likewise.* If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath. Only do what you can, God requires no more; the poor widow's two mites, being all that she had, received praise of the Lord: therefore, cast your mites, as well as your talents, into the treasury of the Lord—the treasury of doing good, both to the bodies and souls of men. *Keep yourselves in the love of God.* Love one another, be kind, tender hearted, with bowels of compassion. We have been told, that our venerable Bishop, once on seeing a needy brother, likely to suffer, and not having money, or other necessaries, wherewith to relieve his wants, took out his watch, and said, "There brother, take that, dispose of it, and supply yourself with what you need." If we love God, we shall love our brother also. O, brethren, *above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves!*—And, let *Patience*, have its perfect work; if we do hope for salvation, and eternal life, let us with *patience* wait for it; take the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an *example of suffering affliction, and of patience;* ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; *be patient*, therefore, brethren, unto the com-

ing of the Lord; *be patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* All will soon be over: the end of all things is at hand.

It will not be long, before our surviving friends, will have to say, that we, also, are no more. O brethren! when we are called to die, shall we be ready to go? Are we prepared, and preparing, to give an account of our stewardship to God? Have we done, and are we doing, our duty to God, to man, to the church, and to one another? When we are called hence, where shall we find our destined place? Shall we ascend the hill of the Lord, and dwell for ever in the habitation of his holiness? Shall we there overtake, and unite again with our *departed Asbury?* Shall we be so happy as to meet, and sit down with him in that sweet world of love? There shall we see JESUS, in the midst of his glory, seated on his GREAT WHITE THRONE; and surrounded by those who were *redeemed from the earth*, crying out, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; and I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could*

number, of all nations, und kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. And crying with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb; and they fell before the throne, and worshipped God; saying, Amen; Blessing, and honor, and wisdom, and glory, and power, and might, and thanksgiving, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen! There my brethren, among that innumerable multitude, we hope to meet our Asbury, the Wesleys, Fletcher, Coke, Whatcoat, and all the saints, of every name, with all our friends, who have departed in the faith; there, we hope to see Jesus, surrounded by the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and martyrs; and to join them, in the song of Moses and the Lamb, never to be separated again. Oh, The enrapturing contemplation! How ecstatic the vision, to see them all in glory! How overwhelming, how heart melting the reflection, and how delightful the anticipation! The thought, the hopeful expectation, fills my soul with awful sensations, and sympathetic emotions! My heart fills, even to overflowing—I feel a strange conflict, of inexplicable and unspeakable sensations, almost bordering upon raptures of joy and wonder. Oh, the anticipations of hope;

the representations of faith; the exceeding great and precious promises, which are all yea and amen, in Christ Jesus! With profound adoration and reverential awe, I bow my head, and prostrate fall as in the dust, O Lord at thy feet! Oh! my God! uphold us all; strengthen and support us a little longer; and bring us off more than conquerors, in this state of trial and conflict, and then, take us home to thyself, and receive us up to glory!—

O, brethren! shall we be so happy, at last, as to ascend to the skies, to go up triumphantly as in the chariot of fire, and join those thousands of thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands, to sing doxologies, hosannas, and hallelujahs to God and the Lamb forever and ever! There, the unwearied congregations shall never break up! There, united brethren and friends, shall never part again! There, no sorrow, affliction, or death, shall ever enter! All tears shall be wiped away from these eyes, and there shall be weeping no more. All will be uninterrupted felicity, and extatic raptures of joy and love! It doth not yet appear fully what we shall be; but when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, we shall see him as he is; and shall be like him; and shall appear with him in his glory! And shall we see Jesus as he is? The

once crucified, but now highly exalted Saviour? Shall we appear with him; shall we be like him; and shall we dwell with him, in the fulness of the brightness of his glory forever? How the Hosannas will echo through all the celestial plains; while unspeakable glories shall fill the heavenly place!

They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south; of every people, and nation, and kindred, and tongue, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. What heights of raptures shall we know, when round his throne we meet! Oh! my Lord! shall I be there? Shall I be so happy, as to enter, with our fathers and brethren, into that heavenly glory? Shall I with you, my friends, at last, ascend the supernal Mount Zion, the hill of the Lord, and enter into the heavenly city, and into the temple of God, the saints secure abode, and their eternal home? Oh! it is the holy of holies, where Christ our Redeemer, and forerunner, has gone, and for us, entered within the vail. He went to prepare a place for us; and he will come again, and take us to himself; that where he is, there we may be also. Lord prepare us for that heavenly place! Oh, that our God, may now visit us powerfully; and

shake terribly the place where we are; and fill this house with his glory! O Lord! fill every heart with redeeming love; and fix, in every soul, a deep, and godly concern, for this great salvation, and this future glory! I pray God, to bless, and to sanctify, the present afflictive dispensation; this trying visitation, and sore calamity; this solemn, affecting, and mournful occasion; and make it a means of good to us all—to the awaking of the guilty conscience; to the conversion of the penitent sinner; to the quickening of the luke-warm; to the reclaiming of backsliders; and to the building up, and to the sanctification of every believing soul! He, who could make the walls of Jericho fall down at the sound of the trumpets of rams' horns, can shake terribly the strong holds of darkness, by the blowing of the gospel trumpet.—O God! let the sound of thy gospel trumpet reach every conscience! O! that the walls of unbelief, the towers of sin and wickedness, and the strong holds of darkness, may shake, and give way, and fall down before our *Joshua!* O that *Jesus*, our Lord, may enter, and take possession of every soul!

Beloved hearers, let it be known, and remembered, that, without repentance, reformation, faith, justification, and sanctification, we can never be saved; and, without

this, we shall never meet the saints above, nor see the face of God in glory. O! let us awake, arise, and run, let us flee to the ark of safety, to the city of refuge, to the out stretched arms of mercy! Jesus, with open arms, is ready to receive every returning penitent sinner; and is ready, able, and willing, to build up, to support, to strengthen, to sanctify, and to save, every believing soul.

Alas! alas! what heart rending reflection, what heart piercing thought is this, which darts into my mind? I am arrested by some painful apprehension, some awful fears.—What is it? It gives me a kind of anguish—Mine eyes run down with tears—my heart is filled with distress—It is this: Shall any of us, in that awful, that great, that glorious, and eternal day, be separated far from the glorious company of the faithful? Shall any of us, among whom, our venerable departed Friend, once lived, and laboured; who, have heard him preach, and pray, and converse; who, peradventure, have sat in conference with him, and taken sweet counsel together; who, have associated with him, entertained him in our houses, and seen his godly example; *shall any of us*, either preachers or people, fail to meet him in the bright Mansions above? Will any of you, who hear me this day, neglect

the great salvation, and so come short, at last, of that thrice happy place? The Lord forbid, that any of us should come short of that heavenly rest, which remains for the people of God! Let us labour, let us strive, to enter into that rest. Let us so walk, and so live, in the regeneration here below, that when our course is finished, and life shall end, we may safely arrive, on Zion's celestial Mount, and enter into the temple of the New-Jerusalem above. The Lord grant us grace, so to live, and so to order our conversation in righteousness, as becometh the gospel of Christ, while here, in time, that we may all meet together there in eternity! Oh! that our fathers, and mothers, and children, and brethren, and friends, according to the flesh; and also in Israel, according to the spirit, may then come up before the Lord, and say, Here we are, and the children, and friends, thou hast graciously given us: we have brought them with us, here we are, ready to join the innumerable armies of those who were redeemed from among men, and, who, have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Oh! what acclamations of joy, and glorious exultations of unutterable delight! At his right hand there are pleasures for ever more.

O God, of power, of wisdom, and of good-

ness! O Lord, most merciful and gracious, who art glorious in holiness, make the application! Let thy power, be felt in thy word! Let thy Spirit, descend like the rushing of a mighty wind! Let thy love, like a flame of fire, kindle upon the altar of every heart! Let thy glory overshadow us, and fill the house, and make the place awful, and glorious, because of thy presence! And let thy mercy, and thy great salvation, be extended to every soul!

Shall I now come to a close? My heart is full and enlarged toward you. Brethren of the ministry, our Father, who used to go in and out before us, has bidden us a final farewell, till we meet him above. Adhere to his *doctrine*; imitate and follow his *example*; be pure in your *purpose*; be steadfastly unshaken in *faith*; endure with much *long-suffering*; be constant and fervent in *charity*; and daily, and perseveringly, live in the *patience of hope*. Follow on to know the Lord, to do his righteous will, to live to his glory, and to win souls to Christ, until you finish your course; that then, you may leave this world, triumphant in the faith, exulting in redeeming love, and go rejoicing home to glory; and there, shine like the stars in the firmament, for ever and ever.

Brethren of the church, and hearers generally, one and all of you, *Prepare to meet your*

God. Prepare to die; prepare for judgment; prepare for heaven. Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation: you have no time to lose; escape for your lives; flee, Oh, flee from the wrath to come!

I have but little more to say.—When will the world, or the church, be favoured and blessed with such another *servant of God*, as that which we have lost? I never expect to see one come up to his standard, in all respects. There are many Reverends, and Right Reverends, in the world; but where are the labourers in the Lord's vineyard? who are the servants, the labourers in the harvest? Titles, distinctions, dignities, benefices, and places, are but empty sounds, and paltry things; compared with the more substantial, and more excellent, dignity and appellation, THE SERVANT OF THE LORD—THE AMBASSADOR OF GOD—THE GOSPEL LABOURER.—The Lord requires that his Ministers should be *servants* and *labourers*. He that is the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all. St. Paul said, *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.—Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* And our Lord said, *Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not*

robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.—The servant is not greater than his Lord: neither he that is sent, greater than he who sent him.—I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. O ye servants of the Lord! are ye intrusted with the "Mysteries" of the Most high God? Are ye the ministers of the sanctuary, and of the tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man? Is the dispensation of the gospel committed unto you? Is it not your highest honor, your greatest glory, to be *the Servants of God*, the servants of the church, the servants of each other, and the servants of all, for the sake of Jesus Christ? "Oh! that my Lord would count me meet, to wash his dear disciples' feet!" In love, with humility, diligence, and fidelity, let us serve God, and his blessed cause; and serve one another, and the church of Christ! Let us be *labourers* in the vineyard, and *workers together* with Christ in the harvest! Be not slothful, nor idle—Arise, there is no rest for you yet! This is not our resting place, we have no abiding city here; but we seek one to come. Let us not be ashamed, nor afraid, to discharge our duty; let us do the work of evangelists, with zeal, perseverance, and holy diligence. Be not high minded, nor lovers of the world, nor

seekers of earthly pleasure, nor worldly treasure. Your business is, to save as many souls as possibly you can persuade to be reconciled to God; to lay up for yourselves, treasures in heaven; to provide bags that wax not old; and an incorruptible inheritance, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you! God's glory, the promotion of religion, and the salvation of souls, in the work of the ministry, is the business of the Ambassadors of God; for this, let us live, and work, and labour; that the Master may say to us. in the eternal day, *Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joys of your Lord.*

Before I dismiss the congregation, I think it proper to read the substance of a letter from John W. Bond, to Bishop M'Kendree, giving an account of the death of Bishop Asbury. Brother Bond, travelled with him, and attended him daily, and was with him when he died. His laborious work, and his suffering life, ended together. *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labonrs; and their works do follow them.*

SPOTTSYLVANIA, VA. April 1, 1816.

REVD. AND DEAR SIR,

PROBABLY before this will reach you, you will have heard its solemn contents from some other source; but still I feel it my

duty to send you a particular account of what has taken place:—Yesterday the Lord visited us with a most solemn and afflicting Providence;—He has taken our venerable Father from us,—Yes! BISHOP ASBURY is dead!

We reached the house of his old friend, John Potts, in Manchester, on Saturday the 16th day of March. On Sabbath he insisted on speaking to a congregation, to be convened at four o'clock in Brother Potts' house. Though it was with difficulty he could be heard, yet he spake for more than an hour; and, when done, did not appear so much exhausted as I expected. On Monday, though the weather was unfavourable, we crossed over to Richmond and put up with Brother Raymond. On Thursday we moved to Brother A. Foster's. On Sunday, 24th, he persisted in a resolution to speak to the congregation at three o'clock in the afternoon. I feared the consequence, and urged every thing I could with prudence, to dissuade him from it; but he said, GOD had given him a work to do there, and he must deliver his testimony. At the time appointed he was carried into the Meeting-house, and sat in the pulpit, on a table, when he preached his last Sermon, from Rom. ix. chapter, and 28th. verse.—"*For He will finish the work* "*and cut it short in*

righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." He spake near an hour, and when done, was almost spent. We, however, set out on Tuesday and travelled twenty-two miles. Father Foster accompanied us to our old friend, Thomas Crenshaw's. Being much fatigued, and very unwell, he tarried here on Wednesday, and requested that an appointment should be made, and word sent out that there would be preaching at four o'clock in the afternoon, saying,—"He wished those that were with him to do something, if he could not." A small congregation collected, to whom I preached, but our venerable Father was too unwell to come into the congregation.

On Thursday we again set out, and travelled twenty miles, and put up with our good friend and Brother, Edward Rouzee—here he was exceedingly feeble, though cheerful. We set out again on Friday: Brother Rouzee came several miles with us, and then took leave as one who was giving up his Father to die. We dined at Brother Hancock's, and then proceeded to our old friend, George Arnold's, travelling, in all this day, about twelve miles; but I never saw him so much exhausted in travelling before. He said to me, on Saturday morning, "If this should be as good a day as yesterday, we can hardly help travelling some." It, how-

ever, rained, and I was not sorry to see it, wishing him to rest. It being proposed that we should have meeting on Sabbath, I spake of sending a note to a family about five miles off, who, it was said, would be much gratified to know it. The Bishop hearing it, replied,—"You need not be in a hurry;" which was so unusual a thing for him to say respecting meeting, especially on the Lord's day; that I concluded he apprehended that he would be too weak to bear the noise of a meeting in the house. He spent a very restless night, and in the morning appeared more than usually unwell. I proposed sending for a physician, the family saying, that there was a Dr. Lewis, a practitioner of eminence, about ten or twelve miles off. He objected, saying,—"I shall not be able to tell him what is the matter with me, and the man will not know what to do." On my urging it again, he said, "He could only pronounce me *deaul*." I said, "Probably he could give you something that would relieve you." He replied, "My breath will be gone before he can get here." I said, "I hope you have no apprehension of any thing so serious taking place—have you?" He answered—"Yes." After a while I asked him, "Whether, if any thing serious should take place, he had any word to leave with me. He said, *He*

had spoken, and written so fully, that it was unnecessary. I told him, "that I had heard him speak so frequently on the affairs of the church, that I believed I understood his sentiments fully." He replied,—"Yes."

After a while, asking the hour of the day, and being told it was near eleven, he asked if it was not "*time for meeting*," being told that there were none present but the family, he replied,—"call them together, I want to have meeting." They being collected, I read what was our Lesson for the day, the 21st. Chapter of the book of Revelation; it being remarkable that the last chapter in the Revelation, which in course would have been read in the evening, should be the Lesson which should close the day on which he closed his labours. During the whole of the meeting his soul seemed much engaged, and as it was truly an affecting time, he appeared much elevated and raised his hands frequently in token of triumph. When meeting was over, he called on me to "read the mite subscription." But being told that there were none present but the family he said no more. His calling for this to be read shews that even the pangs of death were not able to wrest from him the interests of the missions, which lay with so much weight on his mind.

After this his voice failed, but still he

gave evidence that he possessed his reason to the last. A little before he died, finding that I was affected at his not being able to take a little barley water which I offered to him in a tea-spoon, he lifted up his hand toward Heaven in token that he should soon be there. 'I then asked him if he found that Jesus was present? when he raised both his hands toward Heaven with an expression which I shall never forget. He then without a groan or complaint, fell asleep in the arms of his Saviour, at four o'clock on Sunday the 31st. of March, Eighteen Hundred and Sixteen.

His venerable remains I expect to be interred to-morrow, in the family burying ground of his old Friend, Brother George Arnold.

Yours, with respect,

JOHN W. BOND.

REV. BISHOP M'KENDREE.

Now, brethren, I commend you to God, to his divine protection and favour, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to do far more abundantly for you, than we are able to ask or think, and to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified. Now, to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed unceasing, undivided and everlasting honor, praise, and glory! AMEN.

Appendix, to page 108 and 109.

THERE are those who have blamed and censured the Methodist Episcopal Church, for becoming a separate people, distinct from the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the United States. It has been objected, that the Methodists, as a body of people, ought to have waited, till the Episcopalians had obtained the succession, and consecration of their bishops, from the Church of England; and to have united and remained with them, as the same body of people, or one church, and to have received the ordinances from them. Some have been so uncharitable, as even to charge the Methodists with *schism*, in separating from them. They have also objected to the Methodist Episcopacy, as being only presbyterial, and, as they say, not valid. On this ground, they have rather illiberally, and unkindly, called in question the validity of our ordinations, altogether, and of the authority of our ministers, to preach the word and to administer the holy sacraments in the church of God. These unkind and unfriendly allegations, and, as we conceive, uncharitable, and unjustifiable censures, go directly, if they were correct, to

give a fatal wound to the existence of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and, which, we have some cause to fear was intended by them when they levelled their artillery of allegations, accusations, and censures against us; but they can never succeed. And, indeed, it strikes directly at the authority of the ministry of every denomination to preach and administer the sacraments, where they have only presbyterial ordination; for, the principle of objection calls in question, or denies, the validity of all presbytery ordinations: Of course, all, who dissent from prelatical uninterrupted succession, according to this strange doctrine, must be involved in the vortex of annihilation, or extirpation, as it respects an authorised ministry, and their existence as true churches of Christ.

They call in question, very pointedly, the authority of the Reverend Messieurs Wesley, Creighton, and Coke, to ordain ministers in the church of God; yet, nevertheless, those three divines were all, to say the least, regularly ordained, and canonically authorised *Presbyters*, of the Episcopal church of England. The objectors, dispute the venerable Bishop Asbury's ordination, and endeavour to cut off the whole of the Methodist ministry, at one stroke, as being an unauthorised ministry. In this view of the question, the validity of all our ordinations,

the existence of an authorised ministry among us, and our very existence, as a true church of Christ, it struck at. On all those points we have maturely deliberated; we have also searched a great variety of good authorities, primitive and modern, on the questions connected with this subject; and we are prepared with documents, from different annals, both ecclesiastical, civil, and other authorities; papal, protestant, episcopal, and presbyterial, if necessity, expedience, or duty should call us to it, to say considerable upon this subject. Although this may not be the proper time or place to controvert those questions; yet, upon this occasion, I can scarcely refrain from thinking it a duty to make a few friendly remarks, by way of brief response.

As to the question of *schism*, which signifies a separation or division in the church; what church did we divide? It is admitted, that before the revolutionary war, the methodist societies, were considered as members of, and belonging to the church of England; and likewise, the episcopalians of the United States, were members of, and belonging to the same church. But now, neither we, nor they, belong to the church of England; we are all distinct churches: the church of England is one; the Methodist-Episcopal church is another; and the Protestant-

Episcopal church, in the United States, is another. Perhaps, then, if there be a schism, we both are guilty of it, in separating from the church of England. For how are we guilty, and they not guilty, seeing we both have become distinct churches, from the church of England, to which we both formerly belonged? It may be proper to observe on this point, that the Protestant-Episcopal church, in the United States, is not considered in England, by church or state, as belonging to the English church; for, a minister, regularly ordained by a bishop of the Protestant-Episcopal church, in the United States, would not, as I stand informed, be admitted to a Benefice, or Ecclesiastical living, as a minister of the church of England.

The case of the Rev. *Thomas Vasey*, is somewhat in point.—He was one of the first ordained Methodist preachers, and came to the United States, with Dr. Coke, and Mr. Whatcoat; in process of time, he got re-ordained by a bishop of the Protestant-Episcopal church, in the United States; and some time afterward, he returned to England, and is yet living; but to the best of my information he has never been acknowledged, recognized, nor known, as a minister of the church of England; though ordained, by a bishop of the Protestant-Epis-

copal church, in the United States; and I believe, is no farther known there, as a member of the church of England, than in his standing, as a Methodist preacher, to this day. What then becomes of the question of schism, as applied to us, any more than to themselves? Yet, I grant, they stand nigher related to the English church than we.

I do not apprehend that either of us, strictly speaking, are guilty of schism; but is it not an unfriendly term of reproach used against us; which, perhaps, with some degree of force, might be retorted against themselves? On the acknowledgment of the Independence of the United States, by Great Britain, she not only withdrew from us her claim of civil authority, but also her ecclesiastical jurisdiction—of course, we were as free from her hierarchy, as we were from her Monarchy; and were at as full liberty to form and regulate our ecclesiastical, as our civil governments: and were altogether free to provide for ourselves, both in church and state, without infringing on the rights and privileges of any others; and, without incuring the uncharitable and unjust imputation of schism, in the one case or the other. In this situation of rights and liberty, we all stood in 1783. After which, the Methodist-Episcopal church, and

the Protestant-Episcopal church, in the United States, both organized themselves, and framed their respective constitutional forms of church government; distinct from the church of England, and distinct from each other.

Now, a question arises, which of these two churches, the Methodist-Episcopal, or the Protestant-Episcopal, in the United States, first organized, and constituted themselves, a distinct Episcopal church; with their own Episcopal superiors, as Superintendents, or Bishops, at their head? And which of these two churches, as springing from, or rising out of the church of England, is the senior, or oldest church? It will probably appear, taking date, from the times of the ordinations, or consecrations, of their respective Superintendents, or Bishops, and of their being constituted and organized, in their respective, distinct, church capacities, with their Bishops, as their ecclesiastical superiors at their head, that the Methodist-Episcopal church, will be found more than two years older than the Protestant Episcopal church, in the United States. If so, how then, could we be guilty of schism, in a separation from them, seeing, that they, as a distinct, organized and constituted church, are more than two years younger than ourselves.

Dr. Coke, clothed with the Episcopal character and authority, under Mr. Wesley's appointment and direction, came from England, with Mr. Whatcoat, and Mr. Vasey, presbyters, in the latter part of the year 1784, for the purpose of confering orders on Mr. Asbury and others—And at the Christmas Conference, in Baltimore, the same year, the Methodist Episcopal church, was duly constituted and organized, with Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, both unanimously chosen, and regularly constituted, as their Superintendents or Bishops; and the conference rose early in January, 1785. But it will appear from the Journal of the convention of the Protestant Episcopal church, that they only agreed on "a general ecclesiastical Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal church," in October, 1785; in which convention, they made "alterations in the liturgy, and alterations in the articles" of the church of England, and prepared and agreed upon a plan for the obtaining consecration of bishops; and prepared an address to the archbishops and bishops of the church of England, requesting them to confer the episcopal character on such persons as should be chosen, and recommended to them for that purpose. This was preparatory.—But it appears that Dr. White, was not *elected* to be bishop of the church in Pennsylvania,

until September, 1786—That fall, Dr. White, and Dr. Provost, bishops elect, went to England, for orders; and in December, 1786, they were presented, by Mr. Adams, the American Ambassador, then at London, to the archbishop of Canterbury, to be consecrated bishops for the Protestant Episcopal church, in the United States; but it was not before February, 1787, that they were consecrated to the Episcopal office, by Dr. Moore, archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by Dr. Markham, archbishop of York, Dr. Moss, bishop of Bath and Wells, and Dr. Hinchcliff, bishop of Peterborough. This was more than two years after the Methodist Episcopal church was fully and regularly organized and constituted, with their superintendents or bishops at their head. Now, is it quite fair for us to be charged with the sin of schism, from *them;* nay, how could it be, seeing that we were fully and duly formed and constituted a distinct church, more than two years before them? And if we were guilty of schism, in becoming a distinct church from the church of England, have they not done the same in fact; though in a different manner, and degree, with the boast of prelatical succession? But, if the uninterrupted succession of prelacy, constitutes a true church, which is disputed; and, if the church of Rome has that succession, which they con-

tend for, and which is also disputed, and requires proof; then, the church of Rome, by their own arguments, is said to be a true church; now, if every separation from a true church, constitutes schism; what then, by their own arguments, becomes of the schism of the church of England and every other protestant church, in separating from the church of Rome? "*Audi alterem partem.*"

As to the validity of our ordination, and our authorised ministry, as a presbyterial Episcopacy, with full and ample authority to preach the word, and to administer the holy sacraments.—I will only at this time offer a few brief remarks. In the primitive church, the terms, overseers, presbyters, bishops, and elders, were indiscriminately appropriated to the same order of men, and to the same men in office, as every scholar and man of reading, and candour, ought to know, and to acknowledge.

In the 20th chapter of Acts, at the 17th verse, the very same men, who are called *presbuterous*, in the original, are in the 28th verse called *episcopous*, that is, *presbyters*, and *bishops*, literally; translated in our New Testament, *elders*, and *overseers*. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, i. chapter and 1. verse, speaks of the *bishops* and *deacons*, only two orders; I believe in the epistle of St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, to the same

church, at Philippi, the same church officers, are called *presbyters* and deacons. Titus, was left in Crete, to ordain *elders* in every city, &c. in the original *presbuterous:* Saint Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, as an expositor of Paul's epistle, says, "*elders*, that is *bishops*."

Archbishop Usher, in his letter to Dr. Bernard, "I have ever declared my opinion to be, that, *episcopus and presbyter, gradu tantum, differunt, non ordine*, and consequently, that in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination of presbyters stands valid."—The same reverend prelate, in his answer to Baxter—"The king, having asked me, at the Isle of Wight, whether I found in antiquity, that *presbyters alone ordained any?* I replied, yes; and that I could show his majesty more, *even where presbyters alone successively ordained bishops*,"—Bishop Burnet said, "As for the notion of distinct offices of bishops and presbyters, I confess it is not so clear to me—Since I look upon the blessed sacramental actions, as the highest of sacred performances, I cannot but acknowledge those, who are empowered for them, must be of the highest order in the church." Wickliffe is very positive, "One thing I boldly assert, that in the primitive church, or in the time of the apostle Paul, two orders of clergy were thought sufficient,

viz. Priests and Deacons; and I do also say, that in the time of Paul, *fuit idem presbyter atque episcopus*, a *priest*, and a *bishop*, were one and the same; for in those times the distinct orders, of pope, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, officials, &c. were not invented."

We could produce a volume on this subject; but at this time we must be brief.—Perhaps it is a duty, though with reluctance, to say something in our defence; but we must let love continue. We respect other churches; and is it not equally right for them to respect us? Let us mind the things of the spirit, and strive together for the faith of the gospel. O for more charity! O that we might provoke one another to love and to good works!

Stillingfleet, in his Irenicum, lets us know that archbishop Cranmer, and other eminent prelates of the church of England, were of opinion, that, in cases of *necessity*, an ordination would be valid, that was performed even by laymen, and that such things had been done; and that "bishops and priests were, at one time, not two things, but both one office, in the beginning of Christ's religion."—They went further, and said, not only that emperors, and princes, and christian people, could, and did, formerly, make bishops and priests; but that, "In the New Testament, he that is appointed to be a bishop or a priest, needeth no consecration by

the Scriptures; for election or appointment thereto is sufficient."—"It is not against God's law, but contrary, they ought indeed so to do, and there be histories, and witnesses, that christian princes, and other laymen unconsecrate, have done the same"—It is not forbidden by God's law"—These are a part of the answers of Cranmer, and other bishops, and divines, of the church of England, to a part of seventeen questions proposed to them by the select Assembly at Windsor Castle, called together by the king's special order. These answers which relate to an authorised ministry in cases of necessity, the archbishop of Canterbury, the archbishop of York, the bishop of Rochester, the bishop of London, the bishop of Carlisle, &c. &c. of the learned doctors of divinity, "gave, in their several resolutions, in papers, to the questions propounded, with their names subscribed. All whose judgments were accurately summed up, and set down by the archbishop of Canterbury himself"—so says Stillingfleet, author of the "*Origines Sacræ*," who was, after publishing this, advanced to be the bishop of Worcester—and a great deal more, is in his Irenicum to our purpose.

In the primitive times, the presbyters of the apostolic church at Alexandria, used to make their own bishops, successively, for which fact, we have the testimony of archbishop Usher, of St. Jerome, and of Euty-

chius a patriarch of Alexandria, who wrote the annals of that church, an extract of which was translated into Latin by Selden, and appeared at Oxford 1642, the whole annals, were published in Arabick and Latin by Pocock, in 1659. And other authorities prove the same, that presbyters successively made their own bishops; and we have no evidence, but that their ordinations were as valid, and their ministry as fully authorised, and as evangelical, as if they had been consecrated by any archbishop or the pope himself. We apprehend that the Methodist Episcopal church, may rest confidently satisfied, that their ordination is as good, and their ministry as valid, and as evangelically authorised, as all the popes, or prelates, in the universe could make it. If it were necessary, we are prepared to meet the question more fully and at large. We stand upon a rock; and, as we believe, a sure foundation. Turtullian says, *Ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici*—"Wheresoever three are gathered together in the name of the Lord, there is a church, although there be but the laity."

I feel disposed to present the reader with a few additional remarks and extracts, chiefly from Stillingfleet's Irenicum. He says, "God, by his own laws, hath given men power and liberty to determine the particular form of church government among them. Hence it may appear, that though one form

of government be agreeable to the word, it doth not follow that another is not; or because one is lawful, another is unlawful: one form may be more agreeable to some parts, places, people, and times, than others are. In which case that form of government is to be settled which is most agreeable to the present state of a place, and is most advantageously conducive to the promoting the ends of church government in that place or nation." And he asserts, that "any particular form of government agreed upon by the governors of the church, consonant to the general rules of scripture, to be of divine right"—because God's own law allows of that right. "The *reason* of church government is immutable in all times and places, which is the preservation of the peace and unity of the church; but the particular *form* of that government, the laws of God have left to the prudence of particular churches to determine. So the same *reason* of church government may call for an equality in the persons acting as governors of the church in one place; which may call for superiority and subordination in another." Hence we find that this distinguished author and eminent bishop of the church of England, considered, that church government itself alone is of divine right; but the form and mode is of human institution; because the law of God requires government, but authorises the churches, respectively, to adopt that

mode or form which discretion and prudence may dictate or direct.

"I confess, said Stillingfleet, the discipline of the primitive church hath been very much misrepresented to us, by men looking upon it through the glass of modern practices and customs among us.—Whether any shall succeed the apostles in superiority of power over presbyters, or all remain governing the church in an equality of power, is no where determined by the will of Christ in scripture; and so not necessarily binding christians"—He says, "That Christ did never intend to institute any one form of government in his church—no one form is prescribed in scripture; all the standing laws respecting church government, are equally applicable to several forms.—All the *laws* in scripture respecting church government, may be referred to three heads. 1. The *qualification of the persons* for the office of government; 2d. Such as require a *right management* of their office; 3. Such as *lay down rules* for the management of their office. Now, all these are equally applicable to either of the forms; and are equally required as necessary in a bishop, whether taken for one of a superior order above presbyters, or else only for a single presbyter."

Speaking of the power of ordination, and of jurisdiction &c. he says, "Though it belongs habitually to every presbyter, *in actu primo;* but the limitation and exercise of

that power doth belong to the church in common, and is subject to positive restraints, by prudential determinations. Though it belong to every presbyter habitually, yet being about matters of public concernment, some further authority in a church constituted, is necessary beside the power of order. Though, intrinsically, the power remain in every presbyter, yet the execution of it belongs to those who are so appointed. And therefore, *Camero* determines that, ordination doth not belong to the power of *order* only, but to the power of *jurisdiction;* and, therefore, subject to positive restraints by prudential determinations. By this we may understand how lawful the exercise of an episcopal power may be in the church of God, supposing an equality in all church officers (bishops and presbyters) as to the power of order."

In vindicating St. Jerome, from a contradiction, he replies to those who strove to make him contradict himself, "Jerome, spends a great part of the epistle to prove that a bishop and a presbyter, are the same. Is it imaginable that a man who had been proving all along the superiority of a presbyter, above a deacon, because of his identity with a bishop in the apostles' time, should, at the same time say, that a bishop was above a presbyter by the apostles' institution, and so directly overthrow all he had been saying before? The plain meaning then of Jerome is no more but this, as Aaron and his sons in the order of priesthood were above the

Levites, under the law; so the bishops and presbyters, in the order of the Evangelical priesthood, are above the deacons under the gospel. The comparison runs not between Aaron and his sons under the law, and bishops and presbyters under the gospel; but between Aaron and his sons as one part, and the Levites as the other; so under the gospel, bishops and presbyters make one part of the comparison, and the other part, under the gospel, is that of deacons --The opposition is between the same power of order, which is alike in bishops and presbyters, to that of deacons, which stood in competition with them. The scope and drift of Jerome's epistle, was, to chastise one who made deacons superior, (or equal) to presbyters." He clearly proves that the form of church orders and government was not taken up, by the apostles, from analogy to the temple, but to the synagogue--and of course the orders of the ministry not from the levitical priesthood, but from the elders or presbyters, the rulers in the synagogue.

Speaking of the usage in the synagogues, he says, "Before they had restrained themselves of their own liberty, then the general rule for ordination among them was, *every one*, who was regularly ordained himself, *had the power of ordaining his disciples*, as *Maimonides* affirms. To the same purpose is that testimony of the *Gemara Babylonia*, in Mr. *Selden*, *Rabbi Abba Bar Jonah* said, that, in times of old, every one was wont (accustomed) to ordain his own disciples, to which purposes, many instances are there brought. But this course was altered, and they

were restrained from their former liberty, as they say, out of reverence to the house of *Hillel*, they agreed that none should ordain others without the presence of the prince of the *Sanhedrin*, or a licence obtained from him for that end—The same distinction may be observed under the gospel in reference to the fixed officers of the church; for we may consider them in their first state and period; as the *presbyters* did rule the church in common, as *Jerome* tells us: before the jurisdiction of presbyters was restrained by mutual consent, the presbyters enjoyed the same liberty that the presbyters among the Jews did, of ordaining other presbyters, by that power they were invested in, or with, at their own ordination. In the first primitive church, the presbyters all acted in common, for the welfare of the church, and either did, or might, ordain others to the same authority with themselves; because the intrinsical power of order is equally in them and in those who were afterwards appointed governors over presbyters. And the collation of orders doth come from the power of order, and not merely from the power of jurisdiction. It being likewise fully acknowledged by the schoolmen, that bishops are not superior above presbyters, as to the power of order. The clearest evidence of this is in the church of Alexandria, of which Jerome speaks. To which we may add what *Eutychius*, the patriarch of Alexandria saith in his *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ*" (or annals of the church of Alexandria, to which we before referred) "published in Arabick (and Latin) by the most learned Selden, (and also by Pocock) who expressly affirms, *that*

the twelve presbyters, constituted by Mark, upon the vacancy of the See, did choose out of their number, one to be head over the rest, and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him and blessed him, and made him patriarch," or bishop. Here the presbyters alone made bishops, as Usher told king Charles. We see that where no positive restraints, from consent and choice; for the unity and peace of the church, have restrained men's liberty, as to their external exercise of the power of order or jurisdiction, every one being himself advanced into the authority of a church governor, hath an internal power of conferring the same upon persons fit for it; and yet have a right so to do, when no ecclesiastical jurisdiction restrains that liberty: and such ordination is as scriptural and valid as if it had come from Canterbury or Rome.

" We come to the second period or state of the church, when the former liberty was restrained, by some act of the church itself, for preventing the inconveniencies which might follow the too common use of the former liberty of ordinations. *Antonius de Rosellis* expresses himself, *Every presbyter, and presbyters, did ordain indifferently, and thence arose divisions:* thence the liberty was restrained, and reserved peculiarly to some persons who did act in the several presbyteries, without whose presence no ordination by the church was to be looked upon as regular, *(but this was a human prudential regulation.)* Being granted that such a restraint was laid upon the liberty of presbyters ordaining; the exercise of that power may be restrained still, granting it to be radically and intrinsically in them;" or,

the restraints taken off, the authority, and validity of such ordinations, be as good as any in the world. "Those who are for ordinations only by a superior order in the church, acknowledging a radical power for ordination in the presbyters, which may be exercised in cases of necessity, do thereby make it evident, that none who grant that, do think that any positive law of God hath forbidden presbyters the power of ordination; for then it must be unlawful, and in case of necessity it cannot be valid: which doctrine, says bishop Stillingfleet, I dare with confidence assert to be a stranger to our church of England, as shall be largely made appear afterwards,"—*Hooker*, *Grindal*, *Whitgift*, &c. &c. and even *Bancroft himself*, yielded the point, that ordinations by presbyters was valid, in cases of necessity.

"I believe that upon the strictest enquiry, *Medina's* judgment will prove true, that *Jerome*, *Austin*, *Ambrose*, *Sedulius*, *Primasius*, *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret*, *&c.* were all of this judgment, as to the identity of both name and order of bishops and presbyters in the primitive church."—Stillingfleet informs us that *Grotius*, in his epistle to *Bignonius*, to prove the undoubted antiquity of St. *Clement's* epistle to the Corinthians, brings this as one argument, "that there was then, no such episcopacy at Corinth, as bishops superior to presbyters."

"The several presbyters enjoyed an equal power among themselves, thereby occasion was given to many divisions, partly by the bandying of the presbyters one against another, partly by the sidings of the people with some against the

rest, partly by the too common use of the power of ordinations, in presbyters, by which they were enabled to increase their own party, by ordaining those who would join with them; upon this, the wise and graver sort, considering the abuses following the promiscuous use of this power of ordination, and for preventing future divisions among themselves, agreed to choose one out of their number, who was best qualified, and to devolve the exercise of the power of ordination and jurisdiction to him, yet so as that he was to act nothing of importance, without the consent and concurrence of the presbyters, who were the common council of the bishop.—This I take to be the true and just account of the original of episcopacy, in the primitive church, according to St. *Jerome*. Which model of government, will be found most agreeable to the primitive form, both as asserting the due interests of the presbyters, and allowing the due honour of episcopacy, and by the joint harmony of both, carrying on the affairs of the church with the greatest unity, concord, and peace.—Which form of government, I cannot see how any possible reason can be produced by either party, why they may not with cheerfulness embrace it.—One chosen, not only out of, but by the presbyters, to be set above the rest; for so Jerome must be understood; and the instance brought of the church of Alexandria makes it evident to be by the presbyters.—I wish all that are of his judgment, for the practice of the primitive church, were of his temper; and, while they own not episcopacy as necessary by a divine right, yet, being duly moderated and

joined with presbytery, they may embrace it, as not only a lawful, but very useful constitution in the church of God. By which we may see what an excellent temper, may be found out, most fully consonant to the primitive church, for the management of ordinations, and church government, viz. by the presidency of the bishop, and concurrence of the presbyters—For episcopacy can never be so well managed for the good of the church as when it is joined with the presbytery"—and we may add, the presbytery to have the superintendency, and presidency of a moderate episcopacy.

Turtullian's judgment, as to church power, he says expressly, "All the difference between ministers and people comes from the church's authority"—St. *Austin*, "The difference between Episcopacy and presbytery, rise from the custom of the church, attributing a name of greater honour to those it had set above the others."—The so much magnified *Ignatius*, says, "That the presbyters succeeded in the place of the bench of apostles"—*Ireneus* attributes the keeping of the apostolic doctrines to the succession of presbyters, which before he had done to bishops—and more fully afterward he not only asserts the succession of presbyters to the apostles, but likewise attributes the *successio Episcopatus*, to these very presbyters—What strange confusion must this raise in any ones mind that seeks for a succession of episcopal power above presbyters, by the testimony of Ireneus, when he so plainly attributes both the succession, and the episcopacy too, to presbyters? Whence comes the community of

names, if they are not both the same, that those who succeed the apostles are called bishops in one place, but presbyters in another, and the very succession of episcopacy attributed to presbyters?—Even *Cyprian* who pleads so much of obedience to the bishops, as they were then constituted in the church; yet speaks often of his *compresbyteri*—It would seem that Ignatius, Ireneus, Jerome, and many others agree, and may be reconciled to one another; all owning the council or college of presbyters as of divine institution; also requiring obedience to the bishops as a human institution, and a privilege granted to the church for preserving unity in the faith, and to prevent divisions.—The bishop was nothing but the senior presbyter, or one that had a primacy or presidency of order or office among them, but no divine right to a power of jurisdiction over his fellow presbyters—the superiority of bishops over presbyters is to be imputed to an act of the church, and not to any divine institution. The Testimony of Jerome and others on this is well known—Even *Isidore* bishop of Sevil in Spain, asserts the identity of power as well as name, in both bishops and presbyters; only for the greater honour of the bishop, and preventing divisions, the power of ordination was reserved to the bishop. Agreeably to this was the judgment of the second council of *Sevil*, in *Spain*; who disavowed the pretence of any divine right to episcopacy, as superior to presbytery. All the divine right, or apostolical authority, existing in the power of episcopacy, equally applies to presbyters as much as to bishops; but the restrain-

ed exercise of that power, which gave rise to the distinction between bishops and presbyters, was an act of the church, after the apostles' time; and of course, only a human institution. For it is most evident that these two names were identically and indiscriminately appropriated to the same order of men, till after the apostles' time.

The "Methodist presbyterial Episcopacy," is nearly that which archbishop *Usher* proposed and recommended to king Charles I. for the national episcopacy of the church of England; and which the king agreed to; but the irritation of parties, at that time, ran so high, and the proposal of *Usher*, and the agreement of the *king*, being delayed so long, that the proposition was rejected. But it stands as a proof that "Presbyterial Episcopacy," was recommended and considered valid by *Usher;* as it also was by others of the most illustrious prelates of the church of England, and the most eminent divines of the reformation. We are thoroughly satisfied on this subject.

He that doth not learn to distinguish between the authority of the church canons, and that of scripture, will hardly understand the difference between *human authority* and *divine right*, or between *human* and *divine* institutions. For the present we add no more.

THE END.

28

144

Date Due

	JUN 0 1 1936		
	DEC 3 1 1935		
FEB 8 '30			
OCT 27 '30			
NOV 15 '30			
JAN 5 '31			
APR 10 '34			
NOV 11 '35			
NOV 25 '35			
FEB 5 '36			
FEB 5 '36			
MAY 1 0 '36			
OCT 28 '49			
OCT 22			
NOV 22			
DEC 5			
DEC 20			

L. B. Cat. No. 1137

Duke University Libraries
D012853230

922.7 A799Ca 134976

SCHOOL OF RELIGION

LSC- DUKE
D012853230